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WHAT WAS HE?

OR,

Jesus in the Light of the Nineteenth Century.

BY

WILLIAM DENTON.

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JESUS IN THE LIGHT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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BY

WILLIAM DENTON,

AUTHOR OF "SOUL OF THINGS," "OUR PLANET," "GENESIS AND GEOLOGY," ETC.

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PREFACE.

About five or six years ago I commenced to make an analysis of the Gospels, and write my ideas of Jesus. After some work had been done, the possibility of obtaining assistance from psychometry suggested itself; and Mrs. Denton undertook a series of psychometric examinations of specimens from Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Egypt, &c., for that purpose, and to elucidate, if possible, those mysteries that have gathered around the life of the Nazarene, and have hitherto baffled the vision of every eye.

What she obtained was so strange, in many respects contrary to our previous ideas, and yet at the same time so simple and natural, so much in harmony with the Gospel accounts, and yet with the operation of natural law, that we thought it best for her to write out in full a life of Jesus, embracing the facts that documents furnish and that psychometry reveals. But this, we find, is a work of years; and such a work could not well include the critical remarks on Jesus and the Gospels which appear to be necessary to remove the extravagant ideas about them that are entertained by Christians generally.

This volume presents some of the conclusions arrived at by a study of the Gospel accounts of Jesus, and gives a faint outline of what psychometry reveals regarding his parentage, life, and resurrection; leaving the complete portrait for a future time.

That psychometry can reveal what is hidden from the physical eye, and concealed from human knowledge, is indicated by the discovery of one of the satellites of Mars more than eight years ago ;[1] of the animal origin of petroleum when it was first found in abundance in Pennsylvania ;[2] of the mode of burial practised by the Swiss lake-dwellers ;[3] of the existence of gallinaceous birds in the valley of the Dordogne in the paleolithic age,[4] — all of which were unknown at the time of our discovery.

The ability of mankind to read the past with accuracy increases every day. We know more about the lake-dwellers of Switzerland and Northern Italy than the Romans, who were two thousand years nearer to them; we are better acquainted with the ancient history of Egypt than the best-informed Egyptian in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. We are able to-day to write a better, because a more truthful, history of Jesus, than any evangelist has written, because we know more about him, and, from our superior knowledge of nature, can form a better judgment from what we do know. German and English criticism has delivered us from all belief in the infallibility and supernatural character of the Scripture-records, and left them free for our investigation and comparison. Mesmerism, phrenology, psychometry, and spiritualism, within the last fifty years, have shed a flood of light upon the nature of man, and almost infinitely enlarged our ideas of his possibilities. What men in their ignorance attributed to gods and heaven-created angels we have learned is accomplished by human beings in and out of the body; and we are thus able to solve, by the light of the nineteenth century, questions that have baffled millions, and make clear what time had apparently obscured forever.

[1] Soul of Things, vol. iii. p. 128. [2] Ibid., vol. i. p. 227.
[3] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 305. [4] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 346.

It is just to state, that, though I have had much assistance from Mrs. Denton, she is not responsible for any ideas in this volume involving the operation of the spirits of departed human beings; nor is she responsible for all of the ideas advanced in the sketch of the life of Jesus given in the latter part of this volume. Admitting the Gospel accounts to be generally true, I have endeavored to show that the occurrences may be readily accounted for without recourse to the miraculous, without impugning the motives of the evangelists, and without supposing Jesus to have been either a god or an impostor. This has led me in several instances to depart from conclusions which have been received psychometrically, and that appear to us to be correct.

WILLIAM DENTON.

WELLESLEY, Oct. 9, 1877.

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WHAT WAS HE?

OR,

JESUS IN THE LIGHT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

INTRODUCTION.

But few men have dwelt upon our planet, whose names have been so frequently mentioned, or whose characters have been so lauded, as the name and character of Jesus have been. About three hundred millions of living men and women regard him as their Lord, and speak of him as the Saviour.[1] The hymns sung in his honor, in our Christian churches, indicate the popular estimate of him in our own country. In them we find such expressions as these: —

"Dearest of all the names above,
My Jesus and my God!" [2]

"Jesus, the name high over all
In earth or hell or sky!"

Of him it is affirmed, —

"By his own power were all things made;
By him supported all things stand:
He is the whole creation's head,
And angels fly at his command."

[1] Johnson's Physical Atlas gives the number of Christian believers on the globe as three hundred and forty millions.

[2] Watts's Hymns.

He is dearer to many Christians than even God, and much more highly extolled: —

> "Till God in human flesh I see,
> My thoughts no comfort find:
> The holy, just, and sacred Three
> Are terrors to my mind."

Should these be regarded as mere poetic fancies, we have to the same effect the sober language of the evangelical creeds. In the Methodist Discipline we find him styled "the very and eternal God;" and the Athanasian Creed of the Episcopal Church declares him to be perfect God *and* perfect man. Some Unitarian and Universalist Christians regard him as a super-angelic being, who came from heaven in obedience to the will of God, "to bless men by turning them from their iniquities;" while others merely regard him as the noblest human being that our planet has produced, and a model man for the race. Let us, who believe that reason should be exercised in religion as in business and science, inquire who was Jesus, and what relation he sustains to us.

That Jesus really existed, the Acts of the Apostles, and those Epistles of Paul that the most sceptical are compelled to acknowledge as genuine, — those to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians,[1] — present very strong evidence. Paul, who was born but a few years after Jesus,[2] who was educated at

[1] Taylor's Diegesis, p. 270; Renan's Apostles, p. 35.

[2] The date of the birth of Paul has been placed by critics at from A. D. 1 to A. D. 12: the latter date is probably near the truth. In Acts vii. 58 he is called a young man: if he was twenty then, he was born about A. D. 13.

Jerusalem,[1] was at one time a persecutor of the Christians, and, when a believer, acquainted with the brother of Jesus,[2] and a companion of those who had been his disciples,[3] could not fail to have known whether Jesus had an actual existence. How otherwise can we account for his conversion from Judaism to what must have been a very unpopular faith, the profession and zealous advocacy of which subjected him to great persecution?

There is a naturalness about many portions of the life of Jesus as related by the evangelists, especially the first three, that proves the genuineness of the man whose words and deeds they narrate. The treachery of Judas, the denial of Peter, and the personal jealousies of the disciples, would hardly have been inserted had these been fictitious narratives. What but the facts could have induced the writer in Matthew to tell us that the last utterance of his dying Messiah was the despairing cry, "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" that, when the disciples saw Jesus after his resurrection, some of them doubted? or Luke to inform us, that when the women told the disciples after the resurrection what they had seen and heard, "their words seem to them as idle tales"? The agony in the garden never would have been told if it had not occurred; for it betrays weakness on the part of Jesus that no fiction-writer would attribute to his hero. The prophecy of the speedy coming of the

[1] Acts xxii. 3 states that Paul was brought up in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel.

[2] Gal. i. 19. [3] Gal. i. 18.

Son of man in the clouds of heaven would never have been written if it had not been said; for the Gospel of Matthew was composed after the time for its fulfilment.

The life of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels is not such a one as persons writing fiction would be likely to draw. Most of the so-called Messianic prophecies led the Jews to expect a temporal prince, sitting on the throne of David, and establishing it forever. He was to subdue the Gentiles; their kings and queens were to bow in humility before him. The Messiah shining like a sun from the throne of his glory in Zion, all peoples were to hasten with their offerings, and bless themselves in his beams. A suffering, dying Messiah, a few persons believed in, but very few Jews have ever been willing to accept. The tree of Christianity never flourished in Jewish soil: only when trimmed and transplanted did it attain its world-wide dimensions.

But, although we may be satisfied that Jesus of Nazareth really existed, it does not follow that we are to accept as fact all that the Gospels say of him; indeed, it is impossible that we should. A critical examination of these Gospels, almost our only literary sources for a life of Jesus, soon modifies the ideas generally entertained with regard to them. We learn that they were not only not infallibly inspired, but not even independently composed; and we can discover some of the motives that governed the writers in choosing the materials that lay before them when they were compiled.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE GOSPELS WERE COMPOSED.

When the events and discourses related in the first Gospel, and contained in any other Gospel, are numbered in the order of their occurrence, and compared with their order in the other Gospels, some interesting and important facts are revealed to us.

ORDER OF PASSAGES CONTAINING EVENTS AND DISCOURSES AS RELATED BY MATTHEW.

1. Genealogy of Jesus, Matt. i. 1–17.
2. Miraculous conception of Jesus, i. 18.
3. Birth of Jesus, i. 25.
4. Residence in Nazareth, ii. 23.
5. Advent of John Baptist, iii. 1.
6. Prophecy of Esaias concerning John, iii. 3.
7. Raiment of John, iii. 4.
8. Those who went out to John, iii. 5.
9. People baptized by John, iii. 6.
10. What John said to some who came to be baptized, iii. 7–10.
11. One mightier than John, iii. 11.
12. Baptism of Jesus by John, iii. 13–17.
13. Spirit of God descends on Jesus as a dove, and voice is heard, iii. 16, 17.
14. Jesus in the wilderness tempted of the Devil, iv. 1.
15. Tempter wishes him to make the stones bread, iv. 2–4.
16. Devil sets him on a pinnacle of the temple, iv. 5–7.
17. Takes him on to a high mountain, iv. 8–10.
18. The Devil leaves him, iv. 11.
19. Angels minister to him, iv. 11.

20. John cast into prison, iv. 12.
21. Jesus returns to Galilee, iv. 12.
22. Leaves Nazareth, and goes to Capernaum, iv. 13.
23. Jesus begins to preach, iv. 17.
24. Calls Simon, Andrew, James, and John, iv. 18–21.
25. Jesus preaching in the synagogues of Galilee, iv. 23.
26. Where the people went from that followed him, iv. 25.
27. Sermon on the Mount, v.–vii. chapters.
28. The beatitudes, v. 3–12.
29. Salt lost its saltness, v. 13.
30. Candle not to be put under a bushel, v. 15.
31. No jot or tittle to pass from the law, v. 17, 18.
32. Agree with thine adversary quickly, v. 25, 26.
33. Pluck out the offending eye,[1] v. 29, 30.
34. On divorce, v. 31, 32.
35. Non-resistance, and love to enemies, v. 38–48.
36. The Lord's Prayer, vi. 9–13.
37. Prayer and forgiveness, vi. 14, 15.
38. Treasure in heaven, vi. 19–21.
39. Eye, the light of the body, vi. 22, 23.
40. No man can serve two masters, vi. 24.
41. No thought to be given about the future, vi. 25–34.
42. Judge not, vii. 1.
43. With the measure meted it shall be measured, vii. 2.
44. Mote in the brother's eye, vii. 3–5.
45. Ask, and it shall be given you, vii. 7–11.
46. The Golden Rule, vii. 12.
47. The strait gate, vii. 13, 14.
48. Trees known by their fruits, vii. 16–20.
49. Those who cry "Lord, Lord!" vii. 21, 22.
50. Sentence on the workers of iniquity, vii. 23.
51. The rocky foundation and the sandy foundation, vii. 24–29.
52. Cure of a leper, viii. 2–4.
53. Centurion's servant healed, viii. 5–13.
54. Many sit with Abraham, &c., children of the kingdom cast out, viii. 11, 12.

[1] This is repeated, with a slight change, xviii. 8, 9.

55. Cure of Peter's wife's mother, viii. 14, 15.
56. Devils cast out of possessed, and sick healed, viii. 16.
57. Commandment to go to the other side of the lake, viii. 18.
58. Scribe says he will follow Jesus, viii. 19, 20.
59. Disciple asks leave to bury his father, viii. 21, 22.
60. Jesus stills the tempest, viii. 24–26.
61. Heals two[1] demoniacs, and destroys swine, viii. 28–32.
62. Returns to western side of the Sea of Galilee, ix. 1.
63. Cure of man sick of the palsy, ix. 2–7.
64. Call of Matthew, ix. 9.
65. Feast in Matthew's house, ix. 10.
66. Scribes and Pharisees complain, and Jesus answers, ix. 11.
67. Why disciples of Jesus fast not, ix. 14, 15.
68. New cloth and new wine, ix. 16, 17.
69. Raising of Jairus's daughter, ix. 18–25.
70. Woman cured by touching garment of Jesus, ix. 20–22.
71. Cure of a dumb man, ix. 32, 33.
72. Casts out devils through the prince of devils, ix. 34.
73. Jesus went about teaching, ix. 35.
74. Jesus compassionates multitude, ix. 36.
75. Harvests plenteous, laborers few, ix. 37, 38.
76. Call of the twelve, x. 1.
77. Power given to disciples to cast out unclean spirits, and cure diseases, x. 1.
78. Names of the twelve apostles, x. 2–4.
79. Twelve apostles sent to preach and heal, x. 5–8.
80. Instructions given to disciples, x. 9–15.
81. Disciples lambs among wolves, x. 16.
82. Disciples delivered up to councils, and brought before governors, x. 17, 18.
83. No thought to be taken about what is to be spoken, x. 19, 20.
84. Persecutions foretold, x. 21, 22.
85. Whom to fear, x. 26–31.
86. Confessing and denying Jesus, x. 32, 33.
87. Jesus did not come to bring peace, x. 34–36.
88. Taking the cross, x. 38.

[1] In Mark and Luke but one.

89. Finding and losing life, x. 39.
90. Receiving me, and receiving him that sent me, x. 40.
91. Cup of cold water given to a little one, x. 42.
92. John sends disciples to Jesus, xi. 2–6.
93. Jesus gives his opinion of John, xi. 7–14.
94. Law and the prophets till John, xi. 13.
95. Children sitting in the markets, xi. 16–19.
96. Woe to Chorazin and Bethsaida, xi. 20–24.
97. Thanksgiving to the Father, xi. 25, 26.
98. All things delivered unto the Son, xi. 27.
99. Plucking ears of corn on the sabbath, xii. 1–8.
100. The withered hand restored, xii. 10–13.
101. Pharisees counsel to destroy Jesus, xii. 14.
102. He withdraws, xii. 15.
103. One possessed and blind and dumb healed, xii. 22, 23.
104. Conversation about Beelzebub, xii. 24–30.
105. Sin against the Holy Ghost, xii. 31, 32.
106. Tree is known by his fruit, xii. 33.
107. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, xii. 34.
108. Good and evil men bring out good and evil treasure, xii. 35.
109. The sign of Jonas, xii. 38–41.
110. The unclean spirit returning, xii. 43–45.
111. Jesus' mother and his brethren, xii. 46–50.
112. Multitudes gathered to hear Jesus, xiii. 1.
113. Parable of the sower, xiii. 3–23.
114. Parable of the mustard-seed, xiii. 31, 32.
115. Parable of the leaven, xiii. 33.
116. Jesus did not speak without a parable, xiii. 34.
117. Reception of Jesus at Nazareth, xiii. 54–58.
118. Herod hears of Jesus, xiv. 1.
119. Death of John Baptist, xiv. 3–12.
120. Jesus goes by ship to a desert place, xiv. 13.
121. The feeding of five thousand, xiv. 15–21.
122. Jesus goes on to a mountain alone, xiv. 23.
123. Walking on the sea, xiv. 24–33.
124. Cures performed in Gennesaret, xiv. 34–36.

125. Why the disciples did not wash when they ate, xv. 1–9.
126. What defiles a man, xv. 10–20.
127. Blind leaders of the blind, xv. 14.
128. Jesus goes into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, xv. 21.
129. Cures the daughter of a woman of Canaan, xv. 22–28.
130. Goes near the Sea of Galilee, xv. 29.
131. Feeds four thousand, xv. 32–38.
132. Goes into the coast of Magdala, xv. 39.
133. A sign sought, xvi. 1.
134. The weather, and the signs of the times, xvi. 2, 3.
135. Sign of the prophet Jonas, xvi. 4.
136. Leaven of the Pharisees, xvi. 6–12.
137. Peter's profession of faith, xvi. 13–19.
138. Death and resurrection foretold, xvi. 21.
139. Rebuke of Jesus and Peter, xvi. 22, 23.
140. Those who come after Jesus must deny themselves, xvi. 24–26.
141. Some not taste of death till kingdom of God come, xvi. 28.
142. Transfiguration, xvii. 1–8.
143. John Baptist, Elias, xvii. 10, 13.
144. Cure of a lunatic, xvii. 14–18.
145. Power of faith, xvii. 20.
146. Passion foretold, xvii. 22, 23.
147. Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? xviii. 1–5.
148. Woe to him who offends a little one, xviii. 6.
149. Woe because of offences, xviii. 8, 9.
150.[1] Cut off offending hand, pluck out offending eye, xviii. 8, 9.
151. Parable of lost sheep, xviii. 12, 13.
152. Treatment of an offending brother, xviii. 15, 22.
153. Jesus goes into the coasts of Judæa, xix. 1.
154. Pharisees ask if it is lawful to put away a wife, xix. 3–9.
155. Jesus blesses little children, xix. 13, 14.
156. Young man inquiring, xix. 16–22.
157. No rich man can enter the kingdom of heaven, xix. 23.
158. Promises to the disciples, xix. 27–29.
159. Jesus foretells his death and resurrection the third time, xx. 17–19.

[1] 150 is 33 with but a slight change.

160. Request that James and John may sit on the right and left of Jesus, xx. 20–24.
161. Disciples to be unlike the princes of the Gentiles, xx. 25–28.
162. Cure of two[1] blind men near Jericho, xx. 30–34.
163. Jesus enters Jerusalem, xxi. 1–11.
164. Casts buyers and sellers out of the temple, xxi. 12, 13.
165. Lodges in Bethany, xxi. 17.
166. Curses the barren fig-tree, xxi. 19, 20.
167. Faith can remove a mountain, xxi. 22.
168. All things may be received by prayer and faith, xxi. 22.
169. Jesus asked for his authority, xxi. 23–27.
170. Householder and vineyard, xxi. 33–41.
171. The stone that the builders rejected, xxi. 42–44.
172. Chief priests and Pharisees seek to take Jesus, xxi. 45, 46.
173. The marriage-supper, xxii. 1–14.
174. The tribute-money, xxii. 15–22.
175. The state of the risen, xxii. 23–33.
176. The great commandment, xxii. 35–40.
177. David's son and David's Lord, xxii. 42–45.
178. They durst not ask him any question, xxii. 46.
179. Denunciation of the Pharisees, xxiii. 1–36.
180. Apostrophe of Jesus to Jerusalem, xxiii. 37–39.
181. Second coming of Jesus, xxiv.
182. Parable of the talents, xxv. 14–30.
183. Passover near, xxvi. 1, 2.
184. Jews conspire against Jesus, xxvi. 3–5.
185. Jesus anointed, xxvi. 6–13.
186. Judas agrees to betray Jesus, xxvi. 14–16.
187. Last supper, xxvi. 17–29.

Most of these are contained in the second Gospel; but the order is in many cases different.

ORDER OF EVENTS AND DISCOURSES AS RELATED IN MARK.

No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.
5.	i.	1–4.	7.	i.	6.	13.	i.	10, 11.
6.	i.	3.	11.	i.	7, 8.	14.	i.	12, 13.
8.	i.	5.	12.	i.	9.	19.	i.	13.

[1] In Mark and Luke but one.

No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.
20.	i.	14.	104.	iii.	22–27.	126.	vii.	14–23.
21.	i.	14.	105.	iii.	28, 29.	128.	vii.	24.
23.	i.	14.	111.	iii.	31–35.	129.	vii.	25–30.
24.	i.	16–20.	112.	iv.	1.	130.	vii.	31.
[1]a.	i.	21.	113.	iv.	3–20.	131.	viii.	1–9.
[2]b.	i.	22.	30.	iv.	21.	132.	viii.	10.
[3]c.	i.	23–28.	43.	iv.	24.	133.	viii.	11, 12.
[4]d.	i.	29.	114.	iv.	31, 32.	136.	viii.	13–21.
55.	i.	30, 31.	116.	iv.	33, 34.	137.	viii.	27–30.
56.	i.	32–34.	57.	iv.	35.	138.	viii.	31.
[5]e.	i.	35.	60.	iv.	37–41.	139.	viii.	32, 33.
[6]f.	i.	36–38.	61.	v.	1–17.	140.	viii.	34–38.
25.	i.	39.	62	v.	21.	141.	ix.	1.
52.	i.	40–45.	69.	v.	22–43.	142.	ix.	2–10.
63.	ii.	3–12.	70.	v.	25–34.	143.	ix.	11–13.
64.	ii.	14.	117.	vi.	1–6.	144.	ix.	14–29.
65.	ii.	15.	77.	vi.	7.	146.	ix.	31.
66.	ii.	16, 17.	79.	vi.	8–11.	147.	ix.	33–37.
67.	ii.	18–20.	[7]g.	vi.	12, 13.	[9]i.	ix.	38, 39.
68.	ii.	21, 22.	118.	vi.	14–16.	91.	ix.	41.
99.	ii.	23–28.	119.	vi.	17–29.	148.	ix.	42.
100.	iii.	1–5.	[8]h.	vi.	30.	150.	ix.	43–48.
101.	iii.	6.	120.	vi.	32.	129.	ix.	50.
102.	iii.	7.	121.	vi.	35–44.	153.	x.	1.
26.	iii.	7, 8.	122.	vi.	46.	154.	x.	2–12.
76.	iii.	13, 14.	123.	vi.	47–51.	155.	x.	13–16.
77.	iii.	15.	124.	vi.	53–56.	[10]j.	x.	15.
78.	iii.	16–19.	125.	vii.	1–13.	156.	x.	17–22.

[1]a. Jesus teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.
[2]b. The people astonished at his doctrine.
[3]c. Man with an unclean spirit.
[4]d. Out of the synagogue into Simon's house.
[5]e. Jesus went into a solitary place.
[6]f. People wish him to return: necessity to preach in other places.
[7]g. Disciples went out preaching and healing.
[8]h. Apostles told Jesus what they had done.
[9]i. One casting out devils in the name of Jesus.
[10]j. Kingdom of God to be received as a little child.

No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.
157.	x.	23–27.	37.	xi.	25, 26.	[1]k.	xii.	41–44.
158.	x.	28–30.	160.	xi.	27–33.	181.	xiii.	1–8.
159.	x.	32–34.	170.	xii.	1–9.	82.	xiii.	9.
160.	x.	35–40.	171.	xii.	10, 11.	83.	xiii.	10, 11.
161.	x.	42–45.	172.	xii.	12.	84.	xiii.	12, 13.
162.	x.	46–52.	174.	xii.	13–17.	181.	xiii.	14–37.
163.	xi.	1–11.	175.	xii.	18–27.	183.	xiv.	1.
165.	xi.	11.	176.	xii.	28–34.	184.	xiv.	2.
166.	xi.	12–14.	178.	xii.	34.	185.	xiv.	3–9.
164.	xi.	15.	177.	xii.	35, 36.	186.	xiv.	3, 10, 11.
166.	xi.	20, 21.	179.	xii.	38–40.	187.	xiv.	12–25.
167.	xi.	22–24.						

The different order in which these are related in Mark will be best seen by placing them horizontally. The numbers with asterisks indicate where the order is the same in both Gospels.

Mark, *5, *6, 8, 7, *11, *12, *13, *14, *19, *20, *21, *23, *24, a, b, c, d, *55, *56, e, f, 25, 52, *63, *64, *65, *66, *67, *68, *99, *100, *101, *102, 26, *76, *77, *78, *104, *105, *111, *112, *113, 30, 43, 114, 116, 57, *60, *61, *62, *69, *70, 117, 77, 79, g, *118, *119, h, *120, *121, *122, *123, *124, *125, *126, *128, *129, *130, *131, *132, *133, *136, *137, *138, *139, *140, *141, *142, *143, *144, *146, *147, i, 91, 148, 150, 29, *153, *154, *155, j, *156, *157, *158, *159, *160, *161, *162, *163, *165, *166, 164, 167, 37, *169, *170, *171, *172, *174, *175, *176, 178, 177, 179, k, 181, *82, *83, *84, 181, *183, *184, *185, *186, *187.

Nearly every event related in Mark, and nearly every saying attributed to Jesus in that Gospel, are to be found in Matthew; while most of the deeds and many of the discourses in Matthew are to be found in Mark, and generally in the same order. Two independent biographers writing a life so crowded with incidents as that of Jesus must have been

[1]k. Widow's mite.

could never have so much in common: and it might be supposed that either the author of Matthew copied from Mark, or that of Mark from Matthew; but an examination of the order of events in Mark, contained in the preceding table, shows us that this is not very probable.

In Matt. xii. 22, we read that Jesus healed a man possessed of a devil (103); but the Pharisees said he did it by Beelzebub (104), to which Jesus replied (105, 106, 107, 108). "Then" certain scribes and Pharisees desired to see a sign; but Jesus declared that no sign should be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonas (109). Continuing his conversation, he compared that generation to a man out of whom unclean spirits had gone (110); and, "while he yet talked to the people," his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him (111). On "the same day" he went out of the house, sat in a ship by the seaside (112), and gave to the multitude the parables of the sower (113), the mustard-seed (114), the leaven (115), and others; and we are told that when he "had finished these parables he departed thence to his own country," which we find was Nazareth.

In Mark we find a very different account of these events. Jesus goes on to a mountain, and calls and ordains his twelve disciples (76, 77, 78), (Mark iii. 13–19); and they all go together into a house, and such a multitude gathers about them that they cannot eat. Then the scribes which had come down from Jerusalem charge Jesus with casting out devils by Beelzebub (104); and Jesus makes the reply

(105) that is given in Matthew. This is given more appropriately in Matthew, after the healing of a man possessed of a devil (103). "There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him" (111); the crowd in the house being so great that they could not reach him. Then, as in Matthew, he goes by the seaside (112), gives the parable of the sower (113) and the mustard-seed (114); and "on the same day, when even was come," Jesus stilled the tempest (60) as they passed over to the other side, — an event placed in Matthew at the commencement of the ministry of Jesus, immediately after the Sermon on the Mount, and long before the journey to the seaside and the delivery of the parables. In both cases, after the tempest is stilled, they go to the other side of the lake; and the cure of two demoniacs in Matthew (61), one in Mark, ends in the destruction of a herd of swine.

The differences between the Gospels may be represented thus: —

Matthew. — 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115.

Mark. — 76, 77, 78, 104, 105, 111, 112, 113, 114, 60.

Had the writers of the two Gospels copied from each other, such a discrepancy as this could not have existed; or had both been eye-witnesses of what they relate, or written down the statements of those who had been eye-witnesses, this irreconcilable difference of statement could hardly have been made. Such events as the stilling of the tempest, the curing

of the demoniac or demoniacs, and the destruction of the swine, would have fastened themselves on the minds of those who were present, and they would have remembered more accurately the events associated with them than the conflicting accounts in the Gospels represent.

The order of events and discourses contained in Luke sheds still more light on the composition of the Gospels.

ORDER OF EVENTS AND DISCOURSES IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.

We find Luke stating in the introduction to his Gospel (Luke i. 3) that he had "perfect understanding of all things from the very first," and that he wrote "in order," or, as the original signifies, all in consecutive order. How that order compares with that of the first two Gospels, the two following lists will show: —

No.	Chap.	Verse.
2.	i.	38.
3.	ii.	7.
4.	ii.	39.
5.	iii.	2, 3.
6.	iii.	4, 5.
10.	iii.	7–10.
11.	iii.	16, 17.
20.	iii.	20.
12.	iii.	21.
13.	iii.	22.
1.	iii.	23–38.
14.	iv.	1–12.
15.	iv.	3, 4.
17.	iv.	5–8.
16.	iv.	9–11.
18.	iv.	13.
21.	iv.	14.
25.	iv.	15.
117.	iv.	16–30.
a.	iv.	31.
b.	iv.	32.
c.	iv.	33–37.
d.	iv.	38.
55.	iv.	38, 39.
56.	iv.	40, 41.
e.	iv.	42.
f.	iv.	43.
25.	iv.	44.
24.	v.	2–11.
52.	v.	12–15.
63.	v.	18–26.
64.	v.	27, 28.
65.	v.	29.
66.	v.	30–32.
67.	v.	33, 34.
68.	v.	36–39.
99.	vi.	1–5.
100.	vi.	6–10.
101.	vi.	11.
102.	vi.	12.
76.	vi.	13.
78.	vi.	14–16.
26.	vi.	17.
27.	vi.	20–49.
28.	vi.	20–23.

No.	Chap.	Verse.
35.	vi.	27–36.
46.	vi.	31.
42.	vi.	37.
43.	vi.	38.
127.	vi.	39.
44.	vi.	41, 42.
48.	vi.	43, 44.
49.	vi.	46.
51.	vi.	47–49.
53.	vii.	1–10.
92.	vii.	19–23.
93.	vii.	24–28.
5.	vii.	27.
95.	vii.	31–35.
185.	vii.	36–50.
112.	viii.	4.
113.	viii.	5–15.
30.	viii.	16, 17.
111.	viii.	19–21.
57.	viii.	22.
60.	viii.	23–25.
61.	viii.	26–36.
62.	viii.	40.
69.	viii.	41–56.
70.	viii.	43–48.
77.	ix.	1.
79.	ix.	3–5.
g.	ix.	6.
118.	ix.	7.
119.	ix.	9.
h.	ix.	10.
120.	ix.	10.
121.	ix.	12–17.
137.	ix.	18–21.
138.	ix.	22.
140.	ix.	23.
141.	ix.	27.
142.	ix.	28–36.
144.	ix.	37–42.
146.	ix.	44.
147.	ix.	47.
i.	ix.	49, 50.
58.	ix.	57, 58.
59.	ix.	59, 60.
75.	x.	2.
81.	x.	3.
80.	x.	4–12.
96.	x.	13–15.
90.	x.	16.
97.	x.	21, 22.
156.	x.	25–37.
36.	xi.	2–4.
45.	xi.	9–13.
71.	xi.	14.
72.	xi.	15.
104.	xi.	16–22.
110.	xi.	24–26.
109.	xi.	29–32.
30.	xi.	33.
39.	xi.	34–36.
179.	xi.	39–54.
136.	xii.	1.
85.	xii.	4–7.
86.	xii.	8, 9.
105.	xii.	10.
83.	xii.	11, 12.
41.	xii.	22–30.
38.	xii.	33, 34.
87.	xii.	49–53.
134.	xii.	54–56.
32.	xii.	58, 59.
114.	xiii.	18, 19.
115.	xiii.	21.
47.	xiii.	24.
49.	xiii.	25.
50.	xiii.	27.
54.	xiii.	28, 29.
180.	xiii.	34, 35.
173.	xiv.	16–24.
88.	xiv.	27.
29.	xiv.	34, 35.
151.	xv.	3–7.
40.	xvi.	13.
94.	xvi.	16.
31.	xvi.	17.
34.	xvi.	18.
149.	xvii.	1.
148.	xvii.	2.
152.	xvii.	3, 4.
145.	xvii.	6.
181.	xvii.	26–37.
155.	xviii.	15, 16.
j.	xviii.	17.
156.	xviii.	18–24.
157.	xviii.	25–27.
158.	xviii.	29, 30.
159.	xviii.	31–34.
162.	xviii.	35–43.
182.	xix.	12–27.
163.	xix.	28–40.
164.	xix.	45, 46.
169.	xx.	1–8.
170.	xx.	9–16.
171.	xx.	17, 18.
172.	xx.	19.
174.	xx.	22–26.
175.	xx.	27–38.
178.	xx.	40.
177.	xx.	42–44.
179.	xx.	45–47.
k.	xxi.	1–4.

No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.
181.	xxi.	5–11.	181.	xxi.	18–38.	187.	xxii.	7–23.
82.	xxi.	12.	183.	xxii.	1.	161.	xxii.	24–27.
83.	xxi.	14, 15.	184.	xxii.	2.	158.	xxii.	28–30.
84.	xxi.	16, 17.	186.	xxii.	3–5.			

The difference in the order of time between the events and discourses recorded in Matthew and those in Luke are indicated by the numbers attached. How great that difference is, such numbers as 97, 156, 36, 45, 71, 72, 104, 110, 109, 30, 39, 179, 136, 85, 86, 105, 83, 41, in consecutive order in Luke, sufficiently show. Yet we find the context in many of these cases indicating that they follow each other in the order of time, while in Matthew the entirely different order is in most cases represented as consecutive. The differences and agreements between Mark and Luke will be best shown by placing the passages in alternate lines. The numbers with asterisks show where the same events are related in the same order in Mark and Luke.

Mark.	Luke.	Mark.	Luke.
	2	21	17
	3	23	16
	4	24	18
*5	*5		21
*6	*6		25
8	10		117
7	11	*a	*a
11	20	*b	*b
*12	*12	*c	*c
*13	*13	*d	*d
14	1	*55	*55
19	14	*56	*56
20	15	*e	*e

Mark.	Luke.	Mark.	Luke.
*f	*f	*113	*113
*25	*25	*30	*30
	24	43	111
*52	*52	114	
*63	*63	116	
*64	*64	*57	*57
*65	*65	*60	*60
*66	*66	*61	*61
*67	*67	*62	*62
*68	*68	*69	*69
*99	*99	*70	*70
*100	*100	117	( )
*101	*101	*77	*77
*102	*102	*79	*79
26		*g	*g
*76	*76	*118	*118
77	( )	*119	*119
*78	*78	*h	*h
104	26	*120	*120
105	27	*121	*121
111	28	122	
	35	123	
	46	124	
	42	125	
	43	126	
	127	128	
	44	129	
	48	130	
	49	131	
	51	132	
	53	133	
	92	136	
	93	*137	*137
	5	*138	*138
	95	139	( )
	185	*140	*140
*112	*112	*141	*141

Mark.	Luke.	Mark.	Luke.
*142	*142		47
143	( )		49
*144	144		50
*146	*146		54
*147	*147		180
*i	*i		173
91	58		88
148	59		29
150	75		151
29	81		40
153	80		94
154	96		31
	90		34
	97		149
	156		148
	36		152
	45		145
	71		181
	72	*155	*155
	104	*j	*j
	110	*156	*156
	109	*157	*157
	30	*158	*158
	39	*159	*159
	179	160	
	136	161	
	85	*162	*162
	86		182
	105	*163	*163
	83	165	
	41	166	
	38	*164	*164
	87	167	
	134	37	
	32	*169	*169
	114	*170	*170
	115	*171	*171

Mark.	Luke.	Mark.	Luke.
*172	*172	*83	*83
*174	*174	*84	*84
*175	*175	*181	*181
176	( )	*183	*183
*178	*178	*184	*184
*177	*177	185	( )
*179	*179	*186	*186
*k	*k	*187	*187
*181	*181		161
*82	*82		158

Great as are the chronological discrepancies between Matthew and Mark, those between Matthew and Luke are still greater. In Luke vi. 12 we are informed that Jesus went on to a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer: "when it was day," he chose his twelve disciples (76). The names are then given (78) somewhat differently from the lists in Matthew and Mark. Then Jesus comes down and delivers the Sermon on the Mount (27); "and, when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum," where he healed a centurion's servant (53); and the "day after," instead of going over the Sea of Galilee to the country of the Gergesenes, as we find in Matthew, and curing the demoniacs and drowning the swine, Jesus went to a city called Nain, more than twenty miles from the Sea of Galilee, and on the opposite side, and raised from the dead a widow's son, — an event which is not related by any other evangelist, astonishing as it is. According to Matt. viii. 14, Jesus at Capernaum cured Peter's wife's mother of a fever (55); "when the even was come," cured

several who were possessed of devils, and healed the sick (56). In consequence of the crowd that gathered as the result of this, he gave commandment to go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (57). And a certain scribe came and said unto him, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest:" (58); to which Jesus replied, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." "And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to bury my father (59); but Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead." Then he entered into the ship, and passed over to the other side.

In Luke ix. 51, after 144, 146, and 147, we are informed, that, "when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." To do this, he had to pass through Samaria, and sent messengers to make ready for him in a Samaritan village: the people of the village, however, refused to receive him, and they were obliged to go to another village. Then follows (58): "And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest;" and Jesus answers as in Matthew, "The foxes have holes," &c. We might suppose this to be on another occasion, did we not find, as in Matthew, that he was immediately followed by one who said, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father" (59); to whom Jesus gives the same reply as in Matthew, "Let the dead bury their dead." It is not possible

that this could have happened in Galilee, near the shore of Gennesaret, at the beginning of the mission of Jesus, and also at his last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, and in a Samaritan village.

It is evident, from an examination and comparison of the foregoing lists, that two of these Gospels at least are not wholly original with their authors. The differences that exist between them do not indicate this as plainly as the agreements. It is impossible, if their authors had written without copying from pre-existing documents or from each other's Gospels, that they could have written down events whose order should thus correspond even in its irregularity. Had the events occurred in the order in which they are related in Matthew, it would not have been surprising to find them in a nearly similar order in the other Gospels: but, as the case now stands, not more than one can have given the events in their true order, since no two give them in the same order; and the agreement that at present exists between them, so strikingly manifested in a comparison of the latter part of Matthew and Mark, and through a large part of Mark and Luke, could only arise from at least two of them copying from some common documents, or from each other. Something induced the author of Mark to place 122, 123, 124, 125, and 126, and 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, in consecutive order, and the author of Matthew to place them in the same order. Something caused Luke to place a, b, c, d, 55, 56, e, f, 25, (24,) 52, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 99, 100, 101, 102, in consecutive order, and the author of Mark *to place the same passages*, except 24, *in*

the same order; in like manner, 171, 172, 174, 175, (,) 178, 177, 179, k, 181, 82, 83, 84, 181, 183, 184, (,) 186, and 187, all but the two blanks being identical in both Gospels. What was it?

It is not probable that any of the evangelists, previous to writing his own, ever saw any of the other Gospels. The author of the first Gospel was so anxious to use every thing relating to Jesus which he could collect, that he inserted the cure of two blind men between 70 and 71 and 162, which, if not originally the same account, yet so closely resemble each other, that he would scarcely have inserted both had he possessed other material as good. The same may be said of 71 and 103, the cure of a dumb man possessed of a devil; and of 121 and 131, the feeding of a multitude upon a few loaves and fishes: each pair evidently the same account, but so transformed that the compilers did not recognize them. Luke, who seems to have had more material, and was more critical, in all these cases gives only one of each. But if the author of Matthew, who was thus ready to use material, had possessed Mark's Gospel previous to writing his own, he would certainly have inserted c, the healing of a man with an unclean spirit in the synagogue of Capernaum; he could hardly have neglected the case of the blind man of Bethsaida recorded in Mark viii. 22–26, and k, the widow that cast into the treasury two mites; and the order of the events in the two would have coincided much more closely than they do now in the early portions of the Gospels. We should not in that case find events in Mark in con-

secutive order, as we now do, which are found in Matthew in the order 113, 30, 43, 114, 116, 57, 60.

The author of Mark seems to have been desirous to insert in his Gospel every wonderful deed attributed to Jesus; and nearly every miracle recorded in the first Gospel is to be found in the second. Yet such a notable case as 53, the cure of the centurion's servant, is not there: we can hardly suppose that it would have been left out, had it been seen by the author before the Gospel was written. Had the miracles been copied from Matthew into Mark, we should not find the phraseology in the narratives so different. Yet it is evident that the authors of the first two Gospels had access to previously existing manuscripts, in which events were placed in the same order in which they narrate them, or there could not be that similarity of arrangement between them that we find. The events from 120 to 147 are nearly alike in both Gospels.

The authors of Matthew and Mark could not have had the third Gospel before them, or they would have surely inserted the miraculous draught of fishes, contained in the fifth chapter; the raising of the widow's son in Nain, found in the seventh chapter; the straightening of the crooked woman, in the thirteenth chapter; and the cleansing of the ten lepers, in the seventeenth chapter,—all of which are found exclusively in this Gospel.

Luke informs us (Luke i. 1) that many previous to him had taken in hand to set forth in order what was surely believed by the Christians of his time; and it might be considered as very probable

that Luke had at least the first and second Gospels, and that from them he drew a large portion of what his own contains in common with them: yet, if Luke had been conversant with the genealogy of Jesus contained in the first Gospel, it is unreasonable to suppose that he would have inserted a second, so widely and so irreconcilably different from it. Why should he have left out such interesting accounts as 123 and 129, Jesus' walking on the sea, and curing the Syrophenician woman's daughter? They could not but have been attractive to him, had he ever seen them.

But, since these evangelists did not copy from each other's Gospels, we are compelled by their arrangement to believe that they did copy from pre-existing manuscripts, and manuscripts that, as we shall see, had been copied so frequently, and altered so much, that, although the order of the incidents remained the same, the incidents themselves had been so changed, that in some cases they are hardly recognizable.

That these Gospels were composed from pre-existing documents is also indicated by the fact that they have so much in common. Out of the multitude of sayings and deeds of Jesus, no three men could have independently chosen so large a number. In Mark we find a hundred and fifteen events and discourses, from the genealogy of Jesus to the last supper, which are related in Matthew; and in Luke no less than a hundred and thirty-nine.

In the Gospel of John we have a different life of a very different Jesus, and generally a different arrangement of such facts as are common to the other

Gospels. The following is the order in which they are presented: —

ORDER OF EVENTS AND DISCOURSES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.	No.	Chap.	Verse.
5.	i.	15.	163.	ii.	14–16.	123.	vi.	19–21.
6.	i.	23.	169.	ii.	18.	137.	vi.	69.
11.	i.	27.	53.	iv.	46–53.	184.	xi.	53.
13.	i.	32.	120.	vi.	1.	183.	xi.	55.
24.	i.	35–42.	121.	vi.	5–13.	185.	xii.	3–8.
183.	ii.	13.	122.	vi.	15.	187.	xiii.	2–38.

In John, we find up to the last supper but eighteen events and discourses which are related in Matthew; and in all of them the phraseology is so different, and in others the attendant circumstances vary so much, that it appears evident the author must have received most of his information from sources independent of those from which the other evangelists drew.

Jesus spends most of his time in Judæa according to John, in Galilee according to the other Gospels; and John places events at the beginning of his mission which the other evangelists place near its close. John informs us that Jesus was crucified on the day of the passover, which was the 14th of the month Nisan; while the other evangelists teach that he ate the last or paschal supper on the day of the passover, and was crucified on the next day, which was the 15th of the month Nisan.

It is generally supposed that the Gospel of John was written the last; and yet it does not appear probable that even the author of this had ever seen the first three Gospels, or any one of them, though

he may have seen some of the documents that were copied in forming them. It seems to have been written at a time when the name of Jesus had become highly exalted, and a life of him was needed to correspond with the exalted conceptions of his believers. The Jesus of this Gospel is God, by whom all things were made; and from the first he is represented as acting and speaking in accordance with this exalted position. He is not tempted in the wilderness; and there is no time in this Gospel for the forty-days' temptation recorded in the other Gospels. In this Gospel, he knows from the beginning who are unbelievers; tells the twelve that one of them is a devil (John vi. 64, 70, 71), for he is aware that Judas will betray him: whereas the other Gospels represent Jesus as knowing nothing about this, so that shortly before his death he promises the disciples that they shall sit upon twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus does not agonize in the garden: he lays down his life when he is ready, and takes it up again. What, then, could have induced such a writer as this to leave out of his Gospel 142, the transfiguration, inserted by all the other evangelists? One so ready to exalt Jesus would hardly have left out such a glorious subject as this, if he had ever seen it. It may be said, that, having been related by the other evangelists, it was unnecessary for him to refer to it. His Gospel does contain, however, the descent of the Spirit of God, in the shape of a dove, at the baptism; an event of much less importance, and not nearly so glorifying to the subject, and one which is related by

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all the other evangelists. If John the disciple had written the Gospel, since he is represented as being present at the transfiguration, he would certainly have left us a full description.

It appears from a comparison of Mark and Luke that both evangelists had access to documents in which events were placed in the same order, but in which there were differences resulting probably from translation, frequent transcription, and slight additions, as they passed through the hands of various parties; and, where Luke deviates from the order of his documents, — the author of the second Gospel seems to have almost implicitly followed his, — we can generally discover a sufficient reason. By an examination of the table on pp. 23–26, it will be seen that Mark and Luke correspond in the events and discourses a, b, c, d, 55, 56, e, f, 25; but Luke has then inserted 24, the call of Simon, Andrew, James, and John, quite out of the order in which it occurs in Mark. He did not insert it after 23, its position in Mark, because he had given previously a description of the reception of Jesus at Nazareth, and that, in consequence of the attempt of the people to throw him over a precipice, he had gone to Capernaum, where he had preached on sabbath-days, and healed in the synagogue a man who had an unclean spirit (c). He could not have inserted 24 there without breaking the continuity of the narrative; but having received from some other source an account of a miraculous draught of fishes, which he uses, after this 24 comes very appropriately: the four fishermen, being convinced by the apparent miracle, are ready

to follow Jesus, and engage in the superior occupation of catching men. Then follow in order, in both Gospels, 52, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 99, 100,[1] 101, 102, (26,) 76, (77,) 78. In Luke, 26 is not found between 102 and 76, but after 78, just before 27, its position in Matthew, which is more appropriate. Luke leaves out the reference to "a small ship," which is found in Mark iii. 9, between 26 and 76, because he represents Jesus as standing "in the plain" (Luke vi. 17).

We find 77 (power given to the disciples to cast out devils) is absent in Luke between 76 and 78, because it accompanies the sending-out of the disciples (79), Luke ix. 1; Luke seeing no necessity for inserting it twice, as we find in Mark.

In Mark ii. 13, between 63 and 64, we read, "And he went forth again by the seaside; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them." This is not inserted in Luke, because he describes a multitude as being taught but a few verses before this (Luke v. 15), and another multitude just after (Luke vi. 17). But having the document before him containing the words, "He went forth again by the seaside," he uses the same word, *exeelthe*, which is translated "he went forth" in the same place, but makes it refer to the call of Matthew (64) (Luke v. 27).

Following 78, we find in Mark 104, 105, 111, with

[1] In 100, where we read in Mark, "And when he had looked round about on them with anger," we read in Luke vi. 10, "And looking round about upon them all." The writer may have thought it impossible for the Messiah to become angry, or he was unwilling to have the fact known.

no corresponding passages in Luke, because they are all inserted elsewhere, and two of them in more appropriate connections, — 104, conversation about Beelzebub and the casting-out of devils, in Luke xi. 15–20, after the casting-out of a devil that was dumb (71). We find 105 in Luke xii. 10; and 111, Jesus' mother and brethren trying to get through the crowd to him, is placed after "much people were gathered together," and they were listening to the parable of the sower, Luke viii. 19–21.

After an interval of seventeen passages in Luke, — all but three of which are absent in Mark, and some of which were evidently taken from MSS. that Mark did not possess, — the correspondence between the Gospels continues, 112, 113, 30.

After 30, in the fourth chapter of Mark, we read, "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear," which is absent in Luke, because it is given more appropriately just before at the close of the parable of the sower (Luke viii. 8).

In Luke, 43, which follows 30 in Mark, is absent, because Luke gives it as a part of the Sermon on the Mount, as it is also given in Matthew.

The next, 114, in Mark, is also absent in Luke. The reason probably is, that Luke found the parables 114 and 115, the mustard-seed and the leaven, as they are in Matthew, 114, better told than it is in Mark; and he therefore inserts them together, Luke xiii. 18–21. Then comes 111 in Luke in place of 116 in Mark, because after the change made in 111, already referred to, this was the best place for it, the people being gathered out of "every city," so that

the mother and brethren of Jesus could not reach him; while 116 was probably left out because it is not correct. 116 is a declaration that Jesus did not speak to the people without a parable; to which, taking Luke's account, there are some exceptions, as Luke ix. 23 and xxi. 5.

The correspondence between the Gospels continues, 57, 60, 61, 62, 69, 70, (117,) 77, 79, g, 118, 119,[1] h, 120, 121. In Luke, 117 is absent: it contains an account of the reception of Jesus at Nazareth; but Luke had already inserted an extended account of the reception at Nazareth (Luke iv. 14–30), and he very naturally omits the inferior one.

Then comes a remarkable hiatus in Luke from 122 to 136 inclusive, the passages being contained both in Matthew and Mark. No good reason can be given why Luke should not have inserted them, if he had seen them: it is therefore probable that the MS. which Luke copied did not contain them, owing, perhaps, to a lost parchment.

The correspondence between Mark and Luke recommences with 137, 138, (139,) 140, 141, 142, (143,) 144, 146, 147, i. What caused the omission in Luke of 139 and 143?

We find that 139 is the rebuke of Peter by Jesus, in which he says to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan;" and this, to Luke, probably sounded harsh, and unfit for Jesus to employ: or the passage may have been eliminated by some one who had that

[1] 119, the death of John Baptist, is only slightly referred to by Luke. The ghastly story relating to the dancing princess is never referred to by Josephus.

feeling, before Luke obtained the MS. Mark may have obtained 143 from the same source as Matthew, — a source perhaps unknown to Luke.

Then follow, in Mark, 91, 148, 150, 29, 153, and 154; and it would seem at first sight that these passages could not have been in the document which Luke used: but we find, that, although 91 is absent in Luke, 148 is found between 149 and 152; 150, which represents Jesus as saying that an offending hand or foot should be cut off, and offending eye plucked out, was probably left out on account of its extravagance; 29 is in Luke xiv. 34, 35; 153, which states that Jesus went "into the coasts of Judæa by the farther side of Jordan," is left out, because Luke introduces immediately after, i, an account of Jesus and his disciples passing through Samaria, which is not found in any other Gospel.

Then follow, in Luke, 49 passages found in Matthew, only six of which are contained in Mark, and a number that are not found in either Matthew or Mark. The correspondence again continues, 155, j, 156, 157, 158, 159, (160, 161,) 162, (182,) 163, ( ) (165, 166,) 164, (167.) Of these, 160 and 161 are absent in Luke. We find 160 and 161 to be the request of James and John that they might sit on the right and left hand of Jesus in his glory, and the displeasure of the other disciples on account of their request; an unseemly exhibition of ambition on the one hand, and jealousy on the other, which was probably left out on that account.[1] Mark changes

[1] Luke gives, xxii. 24, the rebuke which Jesus administered to the disciples on that occasion.

the position of 164, the casting of the buyers and sellers out of the temple: Luke gives it as found in Matthew. 182 is not in Mark; but the commencement of it may be seen, Mark xiii. 34. The cursing of the barren fig-tree, 166, is what any lover of Jesus might wish had never occurred; and it was probably omitted by Luke in consequence. 165 is the journey to Bethany, which led to the cursing of the fig-tree: since the one is left out, the other is also. The substance of 167 is given in 145, which we find in Luke, but a little before this, Luke xvii. 6.

After 167 in Mark, we find 37, which is not in Luke. It is a beautiful passage that Mark may have obtained from some other source.

The correspondence again continues, 169, 170, 171, 172, 174, 175, (176,) 178, 177, 179, k, 181, 82, 83, 84, 181, 183, 184, (185,) 186, 187. We find 176 absent in Luke, because it had been inserted in Luke x. 25, with the addition of the beautiful story of the Good Samaritan, but attributed to a lawyer instead of a scribe.[1] For a similar reason 185 is omitted, because it had been already placed in Luke xvii. 36, 50.

After 187, we find in Luke 161, and part of 158, quite out of the order in which they occur in Matthew and Mark. As represented in Luke, the strife among the disciples as to who should be the great-

[1] In Mark we find, at the end of 176, the statement that no man after that durst ask Jesus any question; and although Luke attributed the question to a lawyer instead of a scribe, yet, having the document before him that attributed the question to a scribe, he inserts before 141, "Certain of the *scribes* answering, said, Master, thou hast well said; and after that they durst not ask him any question at all."

est occurred at the last supper, after he had given them to understand that it was the last time they should meet together before his betrayal into the hands of his enemies. This is unnatural. The fact appears to be, that, after Luke had advanced so far in his compilation, he found 161 and the fragment of 158 on his hands. They could not be inserted after this; for there would be no opportunity for Jesus to confer with his disciples: so he places them here as best he can; but the other Gospels enable us to see how artificially, and our judgment shows us how inartistically, it was done.

What is the most reasonable conclusion regarding the authorship of the Gospels, in the light of the incontestable facts which the books themselves thus furnish? When the disciples came together at Jerusalem after the death of their Master, and consulted how they should carry into effect his last command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," they must have felt the necessity of having some written document containing a record of those events in the life of Jesus which it would be of the greatest importance to preach. It is not presumable that any of these illiterate Galilæans could write in any other language than that generally spoken in Palestine at the time, the Aramaic, a corrupt Hebrew. The persons for whom they would write were their brethren, the Jews, who believed most firmly in their Sacred Scriptures, and had the expectation, then so prevalent among them, of the speedy advent of a Messiah who should be their deliverer. The document which they would

draw up under such circumstances would be written in Aramaic, and contain what were evidences to them that Jesus was this Messiah, and such deeds and discourses as would be best adapted to convince the Jews that he was. There would be in it, of course, many references to prophecies contained in the Jewish Scriptures, which they had reason to believe had been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, the person, as they supposed, to whom the prophetic indices of more than a thousand years directly pointed. If Jesus was not the Messiah, he was a person of but little consequence to them and the Jews generally: if he was the Messiah, then was he the sent of God, the Redeemer; he would shortly come to judge the world; to preach him would be their duty, and to believe on him of the utmost importance to all. This first document would contain a record of all the deeds that they considered miraculous, which they had seen him perform, and of which they had descriptions from others, — how he cast out devils, healed the sick, made the lame to walk, the dumb to speak, and the lepers to be cleansed; and along with these a description of his death and resurrection, and such portions of his discourses as had been embalmed in their memories. Matthew, having been a tax-gatherer, was better fitted and more likely to be chosen to write this document than the unlearned fishermen associated with him.

This first document would probably be written a short time after the death of Jesus, and would be likely to contain much that was left out when the

religion of Jesus became accepted by men like Paul, "when a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith,"[1] and in the cities of Asia Minor even the philosophers bowed before the Nazarene. Its style, too rude for the critical hands into which it subsequently passed, and by whom it was copied, would be modified so as to make it more conformable to the taste of a more intellectual class than that in which it originated; various additions would also be made to it at an early time; yet the order of the events would be left in most cases as they existed in the original document, and the exact words attributed to Jesus retained.

As the disciples and their converts went out from Jerusalem to preach, they would need a copy of the original work to refresh their memories concerning the subject of their discourses; and this would necessitate in a short time several Gospels, or parts of Gospels, as some might only wish for a portion, or only be able to pay for the transcription of a portion of the original, from which the copies would differ, owing to the blunders of transcribers, and by the addition of material from the memory of new converts who had seen and heard Jesus, or heard from others of what he had said and done.

As the circle of Christianity widened and extended into Asia Minor, where Greek was the prevailing language, some of the documents, previously written in Aramaic, would be translated into Greek for the use of the Greek teachers and their converts. To these Gentiles it would be a matter of compara-

[1] Acts v. 7.

tively little importance whether the prophecies of the Jewish Scriptures were fulfilled in Jesus or not; and many of the references to them would be omitted in the new Gospels. In Matthew, which probably comes nearest to the original apostolic document, there are twenty-four direct references to the fulfilment of prophecies contained in the Jewish Scriptures; while in Mark, which was evidently written for the Gentiles, we find only seven of these references to prophecies; and in Luke, which is also a Gentile Gospel, there are the same number.

In the translation of the various rude and probably fragmentary Gospels from Aramaic into Greek, as the gospel came to be preached where Greek was the prevailing language, many changes would be made in them; and, as Jesus became more highly exalted, what was offensive would be omitted or toned down, and the miraculous element increased, until in John we see the most advanced stage which the Gospels present, — the Lord of life and glory comes down from heaven, and walks among men, his celestial radiance shining through the earthly tenement in which he dwells.

Papias, who wrote about the middle of the second century, is the first ecclesiastical writer who informs us that Matthew and Mark wrote an account of the life and doctrines of Jesus. We have but a few fragments of his writings, contained principally in the works of Eusebius and Irenæus. His statement with regard to Matthew agrees very well with the theory that I have advanced: "Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew dialect, and every one

interpreted them as he was able." If Matthew wrote the oracles or discourses in the Hebrew dialect, whether his work contained the deeds as well as the discourses of Jesus or not, it could not have been our present Gospel of Matthew, which we only know in a Greek form; and how can we tell what liberties were taken in the translation?

That some of the MSS. used by Mark and Luke were in Greek, is indicated by the fact that several verses in each are identical in the Greek Gospels from which ours were translated. In Mark i. 22, (b,) and Luke iv. 32, we find, "*Kai exepleessonto epi tee didake autou*," — "And they were struck with awe at his doctrine." The 24th and 25th verses of the same chapter in Mark (c) correspond exactly with Luke iv. 34 and part of 35: "*Legon ea ti heemin kai soi, Ieesou Nazareene; eelthes apolesai heemas oida se tis ei ho hagios tou theou. Kai epetimeesen auto ho Ieesous, legon phimotheeti kai exelthe ex autou*," — "Saying, What hast thou to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? comest thou to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, — the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Be silent, and come out of him." It may safely be regarded as impossible that any two independent writers should thus clothe their ideas, or express the words spoken in another language, in identical words. They must have copied; and the documents they copied must have been in the Greek language.

There are in the Greek of the Gospels words and phrases of great singularity, that are used in two or three of the Gospels in the same connection. In

Matt. iv. 5, (10,) we find "*pterugion tou hierou*," which is translated in the authorized version "pinnacle of the temple." In Luke iv. 9, we find the same singular phrase in the same connection (10). It probably means little wing of the temple; though it is difficult to fix its exact meaning. In Matt. xi. 10, Mark i. 2, and Luke ix. 17, we find "*kataskeuasei teen hodon sou*," — "shall prepare thy way," — an unusual phrase, that would never have been independently chosen by three persons to express the idea; differing, too, from the Septuagint, which the compilers probably had before them; but some other document led them to use the words they employed. In Matt. xiv. 19, Mark vi. 41, and Luke ix. 16, in (121,) we find the language in Greek to be almost identical; so that there can be no reasonable denial of the fact that some written forms in Greek lay before the compilers as they made up the Gospels.

In Mark iv. 25 we read, "He that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." Some one copying this saw probably the impossibility of taking from a person what he had not; and in Luke viii. 18 we read, "From him shall be taken that which he *seemeth to have*." At first sight, we might suppose that Luke did this: but we find the passage in the very same form as it is in Mark in Luke xix. 26; so that the change must have been made before it reached Luke's hands.

By analyzing the Gospels carefully, we see at least the general honesty of the men who made the compilations. They did not insert stories of their own,

or their order of events would have been very different; and they seem to have carefully treasured up the fragments that appeared to them to be genuine, as if they were precious stones that must not be lost, though they sometimes gave them a very improper setting, and sometimes inserted them twice.

In Luke viii. 16 we read, "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed, but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter may see the light." This Luke took from some document that he had in common with Mark; but he meets with the same statement again in another document, and, having probably forgotten that he had written it before, inserts it again (xi. 33): "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light."

In Matt. ix. 34 and xii. 24, both referring to the same occurrence, we read that *the Pharisees* said, "He casteth out devils through the prince of devils." In Mark iii. 22 we read that *the scribes* said this. Luke appears to have had both accounts before him: he cannot tell which is right; he therefore gives neither, but writes, "*Some of them* said, He casteth out devils."

The author of the fourth Gospel appears to have taken the greatest liberty with the facts; but perhaps, if we had possessed a fifth Gospel, it would have differed as widely from John as that does from the Synoptists. We have in reality but two Gospels.

Matthew and John are supposed to contain the

testimony of two eye-witnesses to the principal events related in them. We may soon learn that this is not the case; and that, if the Gospel of Matthew was written by an eye-witness, the Gospel of John could not have been. Matthew and John, the two eye-witnesses, must certainly have remembered on what day Jesus was crucified: whatever else they might forget, this they certainly would remember, associated as it was with the most sacred rite of the Jews. And yet, strange to say, they put this event on entirely different days.

In Matthew we are informed (Matt. xxvi. 17, 20) that the last supper was eaten on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, which we find in Mark (Mark xiv. 12) was "when they killed the passover." In Luke we find a similar statement (Luke xxii. 7): "Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed." Each states that they "made ready the passover," and that, when the even was come, Jesus sat down with the twelve. In Luke we find (Luke xxii. 15, 16) that Jesus calls the meal "this passover."

The passover was eaten by the Jews on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, corresponding nearly with our April; and, according to the first three evangelists, this was Thursday: Jesus was crucified on the next day, which was Friday; lay in the tomb on Saturday, the sabbath day; and arose again early on Sunday morning.

But in John we are informed that the supper took place "before the feast of the passover" (John xiii. 1); and in the course of the meal, when Judas

went out to betray him, Jesus said to him, "What thou doest, do quickly;" and it is added that some of them understood him to mean that Judas was to buy those things that they had need of against the feast (John xiii. 27–29). If they were then celebrating the feast, they could never have supposed that Judas had gone out to buy what was necessary for it. After the crucifixion, according to John, the Jews begged that the bodies of the crucified might be taken down, as it was the preparation for the passover, and the sabbath, which began at six in the evening, a high day, being both sabbath and first day of the feast of the passover (John xix. 31). Jesus was therefore the true paschal lamb according to John, crucified on the 14th of Nasan, the first day of the passover; and the last supper took place the evening before, on the 13th.

Can we believe it possible that John did not remember the time of such an important event as this, occuring at a date so marked, whether we believe it to have been on the day of the paschal supper or the day before? There is a reiteration of circumstances in John, for the purpose, apparently, of identifying the day, which shows clearly that the writer knew that an opinion differing from his own had been taught. But if he is right, then either Matthew did not write the Gospel that goes by his name, or he knowingly stated what was false; or, what is more probable, the writer of the fourth Gospel, in order to make Jesus the paschal lamb slain for all mankind, and his death the true passover, places the death of Jesus at a time when it did not take place.

We cannot even tell who the twelve disciples of Jesus were; for the lists differ: it is probable that some who were chosen backslid, and other converts took their places. They are thus given by the Synoptists and in the Acts: —

Matt. x. 2–4.	Mark iii. 16–19.	Luke vi. 13–16.	Acts i. 13.
1. Simon Peter,	1	1	1
2. Andrew,	3	2	3
3. James the son of Zebedee,	4	3	4
4. John his brother,	2	4	2
5. Philip,	5	5	5
6. Bartholomew,	6	6	7
7. Thomas,	8	8	6
8. Matthew the publican,	7	7	8
9. James the son of Alpheus,	9	9	9
10. Lebbeus,[1]	Thaddeus.	11	11
11. Simon the Canaanite,	11	Judas the son of James.[2]	Judas the son of James.
12. Judas Iscariot,	12	12	

In order to reconcile these conflicting lists, it has been supposed that Lebbeus, Thaddeus, and Judas the son of James, were the same individual; but no better reason can be given for the supposition than that those who offer this explanation are very desirous that it should be so.

The Gospels then, instead of being the product of the individuals whose names they bear, were compiled by their unknown authors, from documents pre-

[1] The words "whose surname was Thaddeus" are not contained in the best MSS., and are omitted by the best authorities.

[2] "The son" is the most common meaning attached to the original; and not "brother of," as in the authorized version.

viously made up by other authors; their materials having passed through many variations, the original accounts having varied, as the offspring of animals separated from each other, and subjected to different conditions, vary, so that, when the original story and the much-varied one were compared together, the compilers sometimes found the differences so great, that they supposed them to be entirely distinct accounts. Some of the stages of variation that the Gospel stories have passed through can be seen in many of their narratives. In Matt. viii. 14, 15, we find 55, the cure of Simon's wife's mother, thus presented: —

MATTHEW.

1. Simon wife's mother sick of a fever.
2. Jesus touched her hand.
3. The fever left her.
4. She arose, and ministered unto them.

MARK I. 30, 31.

1. Simon's wife's mother sick of a fever.
2. Jesus took her by the hand (and lifted her up).
3. (Immediately) the fever left her.
4. She ( ) ministered unto them.

LUKE IV. 38, 39.

1. Simon's wife's mother taken with a (great) fever.
2. Jesus stood over her, and (rebuked the fever).
3. The fever left her.
4. (Immediately) she arose, and ministered unto them.

The simple account in this instance is that of the first Gospel. There is good reason to believe that Simon's wife's mother lived in what is now a malarious district.[1] She appears to have had a fever, which left her after Jesus took her hand: indeed, she felt so much better, that she arose and attended to her family and visitors. It is not uncommon in a case of "chills and fever" for a person to be very sick with a high fever, and in a short time to feel almost as well as ever; though, in this case, the touch of Jesus may have materially benefited her. The account that Mark gives has undergone some modification, and is more wonderful. Jesus takes her by the hand and lifts her up, and *immediately* the fever leaves her. If Jesus was the Messiah, there could not have been a moment between the touch of the great physician and the cure of the patient: it must have been instantaneous. In Luke, the story has become still more modified: it is not a common fever, but a *great* fever. The Messiah could not need to touch her; "he stood over her, and rebuked the fever:" and so instantaneous and complete was the cure, that she *immediately arose*, — there was no necessity to lift her up, — and ministered unto them.

After Jesus had cured her, we are informed in Mark that the people "brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed of devils." "And he healed many that were sick of

[1] Fever is very prevalent at this day at Ain Mudawarah (the round fountain), one of the supposed sites of Capernaum, where Simon's wife's mother lived. — SMITH'S *Bible Dictionary*, art. Capernaum.

divers diseases, and cast out many devils." This is probably the original statement. It having been noised abroad that the Prophet of Nazareth had cured Peter's wife's mother, the people in the neighborhood brought in many sick people to be cured; and several of them were benefited by the treatment received from Jesus. But if they brought *all*, and Jesus only healed *many*, it is evident there were some that he did not heal. The question would naturally arise in the minds of believers in Jesus who read the story, "Why did he not cure them all? was he not the Messiah? Certainly: then he must have cured them all, and there is evidently a mistake in this account."

Thus the story advances to the next form, which we find in Matt. viii. 16: "When the evening was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils; and he cast out the spirits (with his word), and healed *all* that were sick." Here the fair inference is, that everybody was cured: the word that could cast out devils out of one could out of all, and all the sick were healed.

The account is still deficient, however: it does not state whether the sick had one or many forms of disease; nor does it state the method employed in their cure. In the last form, which we find in Luke iv. 40, this is remedied, and the account is in other respects more definite: "All (they that had any sick) with divers diseases brought them unto him, and he (laid his hands *on every one* of them) and healed them. And devils also came out of many (crying out and saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of God)."

The account has evidently been modified to correspond with an exalted conception of Jesus. The Son of God walks through the land, and disease flees from his presence as night from the sun; and even devils are compelled to acknowledge that he is the Christ.

There are evidently exaggerations in many of the Gospel accounts, growing out of a tendency to magnify the actions of a man whose position in the estimation of his believers was being continually elevated, till he was accounted a god, and nothing was too wonderful for him to do, as there was nothing too wonderful for his followers to believe. Yet it is marvellous that so little should have been added: we have only to read any of the apocryphal Gospels to see how immeasurably superior to them the canonical Gospels generally are, and how truthful the men must have been, as a rule, through whose hands the documents passed from which our Gospels were compiled. So fallible is humanity, however, that, where it would seem in the nature of things that the parties telling and writing could have had but little temptation to state other than the truth, the differences are very great; as may be seen in the accounts of the anointing of Jesus, which happens to be told by all the evangelists. I abridge the accounts, but faithfully give their substance.

MATTHEW XXVI. 6–13.

1. Two days before the passover.

2. Jesus in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper.

3. A woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment poured it on his head as he sat at meat.

4. His disciples "had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? for this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

5. "Jesus said, Why trouble ye the woman? The poor ye have always with you; me not always. She hath poured this ointment on my body for my burial. Wherever this gospel shall be preached in the world, this deed will be told as a memorial of her."

MARK XIV. 3-9.

1. Two days before the passover.

2. Jesus in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper.

3. A woman having an alabaster box of ointment (of spikenard) very precious (brake the box), and poured it on his head as he sat at meat.

4. Some "had indignation (within themselves), and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? for it might have been sold for *three hundred pence*, and have been given to the poor. (And they murmured against her.)

5. "Jesus said, Why trouble ye her? The poor ye have always with you; me not always. (She has done what she could.) She has anointed my body to the burying. Wherever this gospel shall be preached in the world, this deed will be told as a memorial of her."

Here are slight variations, but substantial agreement. In Mark the story is more graphically told.

The ointment was "of spikenard;" she "brake the box;" it might have been sold for "three hundred pence." Possibly the copier of the same account that Matthew gives (for the accounts are too much alike for both to be original) was conversant with facts unknown to the original writer, or he embellished it a little.

Luke has, however, obtained the story from a very different quarter, and after it had been sadly mutilated in some respects, and received great additions in others.

LUKE VII. 36–50.

2. Jesus in the house of Simon a Pharisee.

3. A woman (in the city, which was a sinner) brought an alabaster box of ointment, and (stood at his feet behind him, weeping; washed his feet with tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; kissed his feet, and anointed them) with the ointment as he sat at meat.

4. "The Pharisee said (within himself, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner)."

5. Jesus replies with (a parable of a creditor and two debtors, rebukes the Pharisee), and says to the woman ("Thy sins are forgiven thee; thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace)."

JOHN XII. 3–8.

1. Six days before the passover.

2. Jesus apparently (in the house of Lazarus and his sisters) in Bethany.

3. "Mary took (a pound) of ointment (of spikenard), very costly, anointed (the feet of Jesus, and wiped them with her hair), as he was eating supper (and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment).

4. "Judas Iscariot said, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

5. "Jesus said, Let her alone; she hath kept this against the day of my burial: for the poor ye have always with you; me not always."

Orthodox commentators generally regard the occurrence related in Luke as entirely distinct from that related in the other Gospels. The difference, however, between this and the other three accounts, is hardly greater than that between the story in John's Gospel and those in Matthew and Mark. The coincidences are too great for the accounts to relate to different incidents. According to Luke, —

1. Jesus is in the house of Simon. With this agree Matthew and Mark.

2. A woman brought an alabaster box of ointment. We find the same again in Matthew and Mark.

3. She anointed Jesus with the ointment. All agree in this, and Luke and John that she anointed his feet.

4. She anointed him as he sat at meat. All coincide in this.

5. She wiped his feet with her hair. In this John agrees.

6. There was murmuring. All accounts agree in this.

7. Jesus rebukes the murmurer. So all agree.

8. He speaks encouragingly to the woman. All the Gospels agree in this also.

If we are to have two anointings to harmonize the evangelists, why not three, as Origen suggested? and, carrying out the same principle, we might have four crucifixions and four resurrections of four different men, to harmonize the four different accounts of the evangelists regarding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

There is a miracle related in three of the Gospels, which has been so transformed, that but few will be able to discern in the account contained in the fourth Gospel the features of the original.

MATT. VIII. 5–13.

1. Jesus in Capernaum.

2. A centurion comes beseeching him to heal his servant lying at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

3. Jesus says, "I will come and heal him."

4. The centurion says he is not worthy that Jesus should come under his roof, and requests him to speak the word only, and his servant shall be healed.

5. Jesus says, "I have not found so great faith; no, not in Israel." "Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee."

6. His servant was healed in the same hour.

LUKE VII. 1–10.

1. Jesus in Capernaum.

2. A centurion (sends elders of the Jews) to Jesus,

requesting him to heal his servant, who is sick, and ready to die.

3. (Jesus went with them, and met friends of the centurion.)

4. Who say for him that he is not worthy that Jesus should come under his roof; but he asks him to say in a word, and his servant shall be healed.

5. Jesus says, "I have not found so great faith; no, not in Israel."

6. They that were sent found the servant well.

JOHN IV. 46–53.

1. Jesus (in Cana of Galilee).

2. A *nobleman* comes, beseeching him to heal his *son*, who is sick at the point of death at Capernaum.

3. Jesus said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."

4. The nobleman said, "Sir, come down ere my child die."

5. Jesus said, "Go thy way: thy son liveth."

6. The man believed Jesus: his servants met him as he returned home, and informed him that the disease had left his son at the very hour that Jesus had said, "Thy son liveth."

The centurion of the first three evangelists has become a nobleman, and his servant has been transformed into his son: he lives, however, in the same place, — Capernaum; but Jesus is at Cana, which makes the miracle more remarkable. The servant in Luke is ready to die: and the son in John is in the same condition; for the nobleman says, "Come ere my child die." In Matthew, Jesus says, "Go thy way,"

and in John he uses the same expression; the man believes in the power of Jesus to cure, in all the accounts; and the time of the patient's recovery coincides exactly with the time when Jesus made the announcement.

THE AGE OF THE GOSPELS.

But, if the first three Gospels were composed as an analysis of them indicates, it is not probable that they were written at as early a period as the Christian Church generally supposes, but after sufficient time had been given for the different documents and various accounts to come into existence that were made use of by the composers of the Gospels; and this opinion, derived from internal evidence, is strengthened by an examination of early Christian literature. From this we learn that

There is no evidence that the four accepted Gospels existed in their present form until more than a hundred years after the death of Jesus; while there is evidence that other documents containing discourses of Jesus did exist, and quotations were made from them just as we now make quotations from the four accepted Gospels.

We have an epistle attributed to Clement, and believed to have been written between sixty and a hundred years after the death of Jesus. It was at one time publicly read in the early Christian churches. The Clement who wrote it is supposed by some to have been the friend and fellow-laborer of Paul, who is mentioned in Phil. iv. 3. The epistle is written in the name of the church of Rome to

the church at Corinth. It would make about forty pages of such a book as this; and we should very naturally suppose that if our present Gospels were then in existence, and regarded as authority, they would be well known to the church at Rome, and that in this epistle there would be frequent reference to them. There is, however, in the Epistle of Clement, no mention of any of the Gospels, though there is mention of Paul and many quotations from his epistles. There are, however, two quotations by Clement of words which he says were spoken by Jesus. "Thus he spoke: 'Be ye merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven to you; as ye do, so shall it be done unto you; as ye judge, so shall it be judged to you; as ye are kind, so shall kindness be shown to you; with what measure ye mete, with the same it shall be measured to you.'"[1] There are passages in our Gospels that are something like a portion of this; but, instead of "Be ye merciful that ye may obtain mercy," the passage in the Gospels that is most like it is Luke vi. 36, — "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful;" and it is therefore evident that Clement did not quote from our Gospels. "As ye do, so shall it be done unto you," and "As ye are kind, so shall kindness be shown unto you," are not contained in our Gospels; and yet they are quoted by Clement as the words of Jesus. Some record of the words of Jesus, different from any that we possess, appears to have been used by the Christians at Rome more than sixty years after the death of Jesus.

[1] First Epistle of Clement, chap. vii.

The second quotation given by Clement is, "Remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, how he said, 'Woe to that man! it were better for him that he had never been born than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of my elect. Yea, it were better for him that a millstone should be hung about [his neck], and he should be sunk in the depths of the sea, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of my little ones.'"[1] There is something like this in the first three Gospels; but, by comparing the passage with the passages in those Gospels, it will be seen again that Clement is not quoting from any of our Gospels, but from some other and different document; and these facts indicate that our Gospels were unknown to the Christians at Rome at that time, or, if known, were not recognized as authority, while the sayings of Jesus were supposed to be contained in some other document or documents. If we place the date of this epistle at the close of the first century, which many regard as most probable, its silence regarding our Gospels, and its reference to words of Jesus which are not contained in them, is still more significant.

One of the most popular books in the Christian Church, during the second, third, and fourth centuries, was the Pastor of Hermas, supposed to have been written about the year 100. By many it was believed to be divinely inspired, and Irenæus quotes it as Scripture.[2] It would make a volume of about a hundred and thirty pages of the size of this. In

[1] First Epistle of Clement, chap. xlvi.
[2] Irenæus against Heresies, 4, 20, 2.

it there is no mention of the Gospels, and no quotation from them; but this is not so remarkable, for there is no quotation in it from the Old Testament.

The Epistle of Barnabas is generally supposed to have been written early in the second century, and fraudulently attributed to Barnabas the companion of Paul. Origen calls it a catholic epistle, and quotes it as he does the canonical scriptures.[1] It would make about thirty-five pages of a 12mo volume. There are in it many quotations from the Old Testament; but the Gospels and the evangelists are nowhere mentioned. There is one passage in it which is found in the Gospel of Matthew, — "Let us beware lest we be found as it is written, Many are called, but few are chosen;" [2] but since this may have existed in many of the early documents, such as are referred to by Luke as existing before his Gospel was written, it furnishes us with no evidence that the Gospel of Matthew, in which the passage occurs, was then in existence. There are in this epistle words attributed to Jesus that are not found in our Gospels. "Thus also says He, Those who wish to behold me, and lay hold of my kingdom, must through tribulation and suffering obtain me." [3] We have then, in the Epistle of Barnabas, not only no positive evidence that our Gospels were in existence in the early part of the second century, but we have evidence of the existence of some document, containing sayings of Jesus, which was entirely distinct from our Gospels.

Even as late as the middle of the second century,

[1] Origen De Principiis, 3, 2, 4.
[2] Epistle of Barnabas, chap. iv. [3] Ibid., chap. vii.

we do not find in the writings of Justin Martyr, which abound in quotations from Paul's epistles and the Old Testament, and which would make a volume as large as this of about four hundred pages, any mention of the Gospels by name, though Justin refers to John as the author of Revelation;[1] yet we find him making many quotations from what he calls Memoirs of the Apostles, — quotations many of which differ so much from those of our Gospels, that they were evidently taken from some other document which was regarded by him as authority. According to him, Jesus was born in a cave: "But when the child was born in Bethlehem, since Joseph could not find a lodging in that village, he took up his quarters in a certain cave near the village; and while they were there Mary brought forth the Christ, and placed him in a manger; and here the Magi who came from Arabia found him."[2] He even quotes Isa. xxxi. 16 as a prophecy that was fulfilled by Jesus being born in a cave. Justin tells us, that, "when Jesus came to the Jordan, he was considered to be the son of Joseph the carpenter; and he appeared without comeliness, as the Scriptures declared; and he was deemed a carpenter, for he was in the habit of working as a carpenter when among men, making ploughs and yokes, by which he taught the symbols of righteousness and an active life."[3] He also informs us that when Jesus was baptized of John, "when he had stepped into the water, a fire was kindled in the Jordan; and, when he came out of the water, the Holy

[1] Dialogue with Trypho, chap. lxxxi.
[2] Ibid., chap. lxxviii. [3] Ibid., chap. lxxxviii.

Ghost lighted on him like a dove, as the apostles of this very Christ of ours wrote.[1] He represents a voice coming from heaven at the same instant that the Holy Ghost lighted upon him, saying, "Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee." But our Gospels do not teach that Jesus was born in a cave, that the Magi came from Arabia, that a fire was kindled in the Jordan when Jesus was baptized; and three of them do teach that the voice that came from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and not what Justin affirms; while the fourth is silent in reference to the matter. It appears evident that Justin was not acquainted with our Gospels in their present form, and that his Memoirs of the Apostles was a different document from any with which we are now acquainted. In fact, until about the middle of the second century, we have absolutely no evidence that our Gospels existed in their present form, or that they were attributed to the persons whose names they now bear. From the time that the first apostolic document relating to Jesus may have been written, to the composition of the Gospels, there was ample time for all those variations to arise which are found in them; most of them by simple, natural processes, and generally without the intention of fraud on the part of those by whose instrumentality they were done.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

The widely different accounts of the resurrection of Jesus, which are given in the Gospels, bear the

[1] Dialogue with Trypho, chap. lxxxviii.

strongest testimony to the fact, that, however honest we may suppose the writers to have been, their accounts can only be received as the statements of men about a series of events of which they were not eye-witnesses, regarding which they were but poorly informed, and whose import they but little understood.

According to all the evangelists, the body of Jesus after his crucifixion was laid in a sepulchre; though Luke tells us that Joseph of Arimathea went in *boldly*, and craved the body; while in John we read that he went *secretly* for fear of the Jews, and that he and Nicodemus — an individual of whom the other evangelists never appear to have heard — buried the body.

All agree that the resurrection took place on the first day of the week.

Who went first to the sepulchre, and discovered that the body of Jesus was gone? In Matthew it is Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Mark informs us that it was Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James (the "other Mary" of Matthew), and Salome; Luke, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Joanna, and other women. In John it is Mary Magdalene alone. They all state that Mary Magdalene went; so that we may suppose them to refer to the same visit.

At what time did they go? According to Matthew, "as it began to dawn" (Matt. xxviii. 1); Mark, "very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun" (Mark xvi. 2); Luke, "very early in the morning" (Luke xxiv. 1); and John, "early, when

it was yet dark" (John xx. 1). It certainly could not have been at the rising of the sun, and when it was yet dark.

For what purpose did they go to the sepulchre thus early in the morning? According to Matthew, "to see the sepulchre;" Mark says they went with sweet spices to anoint Jesus; Luke agrees with Mark; but John's Gospel assigns no reason for Mary Magdalene's visit. It could not have given the reason that Mark and Luke give; for it tells us that Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, wound the body of Jesus in linen clothes, with a hundred-pound weight of myrrh and aloes, as the custom of the Jews was to bury their dead, and that this was done when the body was laid in the tomb. Since the body was thus prepared by Joseph and Nicodemus, there was no need for the women to buy more spices and prepare it again. Nor could they have done this for want of knowledge of what had been done: for, according to Matt. xxvii. 61, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting over against the sepulchre at the time the body of Jesus was deposited; and, according to Luke xxiii. 55, the women were there after Joseph had wrapped it, and beheld "how his body was laid." The first three evangelists, as they know nothing of Nicodemus, so they know nothing of the hundred-weight of myrrh and aloes.

What probability is there that Mary Magdalene alone, or the other women in company with her, went to the sepulchre, when a Roman guard was watching it, and a stone had been rolled to the door

and sealed, as Matthew states, rendering it impossible for them to enter? What woman or women would have gone thus early in the morning into a garden, among a troop of foreign soldiers? They would at least have gone to some one in authority to obtain permission to enter the sepulchre, without which their visit would in all probability be fruitless.

According to Matthew, the resurrection of Jesus must have taken place about the time of the visit of the women; for the angel of the Lord was still sitting upon the stone, which he had rolled away from the entrance of the tomb; and, as the women returned from the sepulchre, some of the guard "came into the city" (Matt. xxviii. 11). The men would not of course remain when there was nothing to guard; and Jesus must therefore have risen, according to these accounts, "just as it began to dawn" on Sunday morning, and just as the women approached the sepulchre. The angel that rolled away the stone, and sat upon it, caused the keepers to shake, and become as dead men: but he says to the women, "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus," &c. It would seem as if the writer wished to convey the idea that the women were witnesses of the alarm of the keepers at the appearance of the angel.

What probability is there that the chief priests and Pharisees asked Pilate to guard the sepulchre? The disciples never seem to have thought that Jesus would rise from the dead (John xx. 9); and, even after they were assured that he had indeed risen and been seen, they did not believe it. As has been

justly observed by Strauss, "The high priests must have remembered speeches of Jesus, of which his disciples at the time of his death can have known nothing whatever, (else how could they have been so despairing?) they must have seen the rising-up of the faith in the resurrection of Jesus; which is absolutely inconceivable." [1]

What necessity was there for an angel of the Lord to roll away the stone? Could not the triumphant Christ, who had vanquished the grave and conquered death, burst the door of his sepulchre? It would be more conceivable that a man should help the sun to rise, than that an angel should assist a rising God.

Matthew's is the only Gospel that says any thing about the angel of the Lord rolling away the stone, as it is the only one which tells the improbable story of the Roman guard which watched the sepulchre.

When the women arrived at the sepulchre, according to Matthew, chap. xxviii., the angel of the Lord, who was sitting upon the stone, said to them, "Fear not ye; for I know ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (and, according to John xx. 5, they could see this without entering the sepulchre). "And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you." Then we are told that they "departed quickly with fear and great joy;" so quickly, that it is said "they did run to bring his disciples word." As they went to tell his disciples, Jesus met them,

[1] Life of Jesus.

and said, "All hail!" and they held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said, "Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me." "Then," says Matthew, "the eleven disciples went away into Galilee," to a mountain, where they saw Jesus, and worshipped him; "but some doubted." Jesus spoke to them, sent them to teach and baptize, and promised to be with them to "the end of the world."

The statements in Matthew, however unreasonable some of them appear, place the matter before us very clearly. As it begins to dawn on Sunday morning, the two Marys come to see the sepulchre. As they approach the entrance, they see an angel with a "countenance like lightning," and "raiment white as snow;" the guard, terrified by his appearance, having just fled from the spot. This angel tells the two women not to fear; that Jesus is not there, but is risen; asks them to come and see where he had been lying; and then requests them to go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen, and that he goes before them into Galilee; plainly teaching that Jesus had started, and that the disciples are to go to Galilee, where they shall see him. As they go, intent upon obeying the heavenly messenger, they meet Jesus himself, clasp his feet, and worship him. He tells them what the angel had previously told them; and they carry the message of the angel and of Jesus to the disciples, who believe them, leave Jerusalem, and reach the mountain in Galilee where Jesus had appointed them; and there they behold him and worship him, though some doubt whether he is the very man that was crucified.

But how different is the story that the other evangelists tell! According to Mark, chap. xvi., the two Marys, accompanied by Salome, came to the sepulchre at the rising of the sun, where they found the stone rolled away, and entered in. "They saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted." The young man tells them not to be afraid; that Jesus is risen, and they are to tell his disciples and Peter that he goes before them into Galilee, and that they shall see him there. The women "went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled, and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid."

If the angel of the Lord, in Matthew, pointed out to the women "the place where the Lord lay," and gave them a message which they were to deliver quickly, and with which they ran to the disciples, then we may be sure they did not go in to the sepulchre, and see a young man who gave them a similar message; and if they ran with joy to carry the news of the resurrection to the disciples, as we also find in Matthew, they were not so much amazed and afraid that they said nothing to any one, as Mark relates.

There is a resemblance between this story and that in Matthew; but the differences are so great, that one or the other must be rejected.

According to Luke, chap. xxiv., the women — the two Marys, Joanna, and other women; five, therefore, at least — went to the sepulchre, found the stone rolled away, went in, discovered that the body was

gone; and, as they stood "much perplexed" in consequence, "two men stood by them in shining garments," who said, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake to you when he was yet in Galilee." "They returned from the sepulchre, and told the eleven and the rest: but their words seemed to them as idle tales;" which seems very probable.

The two men in shining garments could not have said this to the women after they had seen the angel of the Lord, of whom the first evangelist tells us; for they could not after that be seeking the living among the dead, the angel having satisfied them that Jesus was risen, and they having run with great joy to tell the story and carry the message which he gave them to the disciples. Nor could they have stood much perplexed on finding the body gone; for the angel showed them that it was gone before they ran to tell the mourning disciples the glad news.

Nor could it have been after they saw Mark's young man in "a long white garment;" for he told the women to go and carry his message; and we are told "they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre." It is impossible that they should have come after that with spices, and sought for the living among the dead, as the young men in Luke charge them with doing.

But the two men "in shining garments" could not have spoken to the women before "the angel of the Lord;" for he was sitting upon the stone at the entrance to the sepulchre, and spoke to them before they had an opportunity to go in, and showed them

where the body of Jesus had been lying (Matt. xxviii. 6). This, of course, he would never have done if they had already been into the sepulchre and learned all about it from the two men.

Neither could the two men in shining garments have spoken to the women before Mark's young man in a long white garment; for after the two men had said, "He is not here, but is risen," and conversed with them, and called to their remembrance the words of Jesus, how could that young man in the same sepulchre break out, "Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here; behold the place where they laid him"? — all of which the two men must have previously told them.

But if the two men in shining garments, standing in the sepulchre, did not speak to the women before or after the angel of the Lord, nor before or after the young man in a long white garment, it is evident they did not speak at all.

According to Luke xxiv. 23, the women told the disciples on their return from the sepulchre that they could not find the body of Jesus, but that they had "seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive;" but how could they have carried such a message as this to the disciples, when, according to Matt. xxviii. 9, 10, on their return from the sepulchre, "and as they went to tell his disciples," they had met Jesus, worshipped him, and he had told them to inform his disciples that they should go into Galilee, and there they should see him?

Neither the angels nor Jesus, according to Luke,

send any message to the disciples, commanding them to go to Galilee; but Jesus appears to them in Jerusalem on the evening of the very day that he rose from the dead. What possible reason could the angel of the Lord, the young man in a long white garment, and Jesus, have had for telling the disciples to go to Galilee to see him, when he was going to see them that very evening in Jerusalem? And how could Jesus be first seen by the disciples in Galilee, as Matthew's statement so plainly indicates, and yet be seen by them within sixteen hours of the time of his resurrection in Jerusalem, seventy miles from Galilee? If Matthew had seen Jesus in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection (and he must have done so according to Luke; for he says that Jesus appeared to the eleven), how could he declare that the disciples went to Galilee in order to see him in obedience to the command of the angel of the Lord and of Jesus, and that there they did see him, but were so little satisfied, that some doubted, showing that this was his first appearance to them? And if Jesus told them on his first appearance at Jerusalem, as Luke declares (Luke xxiv. 49), that they were to tarry there till they were endued with power from on high, how could he have told them on the morning of the same day to go to Galilee, when they could only go by violating his express command, and his appearance at Jerusalem was to render their journey unnecessary?

According to Luke, neither Mary Magdalene nor the other women saw Jesus as Matthew and John testify. They merely saw the two men who told them that Jesus was risen. If Mary Magdalene

alone, or the other women with her, had seen the risen Jesus, and informed the disciples, two of them would not have told Jesus in the afternoon, as they were going to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 22–24), that certain women of their company who went early to the sepulchre had seen "a vision of angels, which said he was alive," and that some of the disciples went there, and found the sepulchre as the women had said, but did not see him. It is evident from Luke's statement, that, up to the evening of the day of the resurrection, these disciples had not heard of the appearance of Jesus to any one, nor had they received any command from him to go to Galilee. On their return to Jerusalem that night, they found the rest of the disciples, saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon;" but not a word is said about his appearance to Mary Magdalene or the other Mary.

John in this, as in so many other instances, tells an entirely different story (John, chap. xx.). Mary Magdalene comes to the sepulchre while it is yet dark, and finds that the stone is taken away. She then runs to Simon Peter and John, and says to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." On hearing this, Peter and John run to the sepulchre, and find the linen clothes with which the body had been wrapped, but the body itself absent: then they return home. But Mary Magdalene, who had meanwhile returned to the sepulchre, stands at the door, weeping; and, on looking in, she sees two angels, "one at the head and the other at the feet,

where the body of Jesus had lain." They ask her why she weeps: she answers, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." She then turns back, and sees Jesus, but does not know him. He says, "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" She, supposing him to be the gardener, says, "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus says to her, "Mary;" and then she recognizes him. He tells her not to touch him, but to go to his disciples, and tell them that he ascends to his Father and their Father, his God and their God. She goes to the disciples, and tells them all these things, which Matthew seems so strangely to have forgotten, and of which Mark and Luke never seem to have heard.

But if, as John's Gospel declares, Mary Magdalene came to the sepulchre "when it was yet dark," and found it empty, then Jesus did not rise from the tomb "as it began to dawn," as we have seen that Matthew teaches; nor was there a Roman guard watching the sepulchre at that time; and, if she could find no one to tell her what had become of the body of Jesus, the angel of the Lord could not have been there, and could not have informed her, as Matthew again declares.

If Mary Magdalene, on coming to the sepulchre the second time, wept because she supposed some one had carried the body of Jesus off, and she knew not where, then she and the other Mary did not see an angel of the Lord the first time she went there, as Matthew states, who informed them that Jesus was

risen, and sent a message to his disciples, which they carried. Nor could they have met Jesus as they went, as Matthew again states; for how could she stand weeping at the sepulchre, because she could not find the dead body of Jesus, when she had already not only received the tidings of his resurrection with great joy, but had seen, embraced, and worshipped her risen Master? Nor could these visits of Mary Magdalene, recorded in John, have taken place before that of Matthew. The first, "when it was yet dark," could not, or she would have found the door of the sepulchre closed with the stone, and the Roman guard watching it, and perceived the resurrection of Jesus himself if she had remained till it began to dawn. The second visit could not have preceded that recorded by Matthew; for, after having seen and conversed with the risen Jesus, she certainly would not have gone to the sepulchre with spices to embalm the body which she knew was no longer there.

The visit recorded by Mark could not have been the same as John's first; for, after that, Mary Magdalene runs and tells Peter and John that she does not know where the body of Jesus is laid (John xx. 2); but the young man in Mark tells the women, one of whom is Mary Magdalene, that Jesus is risen, and goes before them to Galilee. It could not have been the same as John's second; for on that occasion she saw Jesus, and conversed with him, after remaining for some time outside of the sepulchre; whereas, on the visit recorded by Mark, she went out of the sepulchre quickly, and fled from it with fear and trembling.

We cannot place Mark's visit before either of the visits recorded by John: not before the first, for Mark's was made "at the rising of the sun," and John's was "when it was yet dark;" and not before the second, because if the Marys had been informed by the young man, as in Mark, that Jesus was risen, one of them could not have wept because she supposed some one had carried off the body, and she knew not where it was laid. But we cannot place it after the visits recorded by John; because if Mary Magdalene had seen Jesus, as she did on her second visit, according to John, she could not after that have gone with sweet spices to anoint his body.

Nor is there any place in John's account for Luke's visit of the women, and the appearance of the two men in shining garments. If Mary Magdalene had heard from these two men that Jesus was risen as he had prophesied, and that prophecy had been called to her mind, as Luke affirms, she could not afterward ask a person, whom she supposed to be the gardener, where he had laid his body; and if, as John states, she conversed with Jesus, she could not afterward be in the sepulchre seeking for his dead body, and thus receive the reproof of the two men, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" If we accept the statement of any one of the evangelists, we nullify the statement of every other.

In Mark we have still another account of the resurrection (Mark xvi. 9–20), which is not to be found in the two best MSS., the Vatican and the Sinaitic, and by the best critics is not regarded as a part of the original text, having been written probably by

some one who thought Mark's account was left in an unfinished state. According to that, Jesus was first seen by Mary Magdalene, who told the disciples, but they did not believe her statement; then he was seen by two of them as they were walking in the country, who told the rest, but they did not even believe them; and lastly by the eleven, evidently in Jerusalem, as they sat at meat, whom he upbraided for their unbelief, and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had previously seen him. But even this account, short as it is, contradicts all others. It is contrary to Matthew's; for in that Jesus is first seen by Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, and then by the eleven in Galilee. It does not agree with Luke's; for in that Mary Magdalene does not see Jesus at all, but he is first seen by Simon (Luke xxiv. 34), then by the two walking to Emmaus, and lastly by the eleven. It also disagrees with Luke, when it informs us that the disciples did not believe the two when they returned from Emmaus; and with both Matthew and Luke in teaching that Jesus upbraided them because they did not believe those who had seen him: for, according to Matthew, they not only believed, but went to Galilee to see him in the strength of their faith; and, according to Luke, they not only accepted the statement of the two, but said to them in return, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon."

Paul's account of the appearances of Jesus also contradicts all the rest (1 Cor. xv. 5–8). According to that, Jesus was first seen by Peter, then by the twelve, after that of above five hundred brethren at

once, then by James, then by all the apostles, and lastly by Paul; though Jesus had ascended, according to general testimony, long before. Paul, true to his belief in woman's inferiority, does not credit either Mary Magdalene or the other women with having seen the risen Lord at all.

CHAPTER II.

JESUS AN ENTHUSIAST.

We see, then, that though we may believe in the existence of a man known as Jesus, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, a Roman procurator of Judæa, we can by no means admit that the Gospels are entirely trustworthy accounts of him. But, since we have scarcely any other sources of information regarding him, we are under the necessity of taking such portions of the evangelical narratives as appear to harmonize with each other, with human nature, and what we know of the possibilities of a man living at the time, and placed under the circumstances in which we have reason to believe that Jesus must have been placed.

The men who wrote the Gospels believing Jesus to be the Messiah, and receiving their information of him from those who were also believers and had the highest opinion of him, we need not be surprised at the exalted character with which they have endowed him. But when we find words and actions attributed to him that shock the moral sense, or indicate that Jesus was, after all, but a man, and a man subject to infirmities as all men are, and even to some to which but few are liable, we may generally regard these

as having their origin in the actual life of the man, whose portrait, however flattering, could not be drawn without giving us some of the actual features of the original. We may question the extreme beauty of a portrait as represented by a friendly artist; but we may be sure that any moles or wrinkles upon it were really present on the face of the original. We may therefore assume that the statements made in the Gospels, that represent Jesus in an unfavorable light, are generally true, while other statements may sometimes be taken with many grains of allowance. Examining the evangelical histories in this way, Jesus appears to belong to a class of persons with which history makes us quite familiar, and of which there are numerous living representatives; and a consideration of them will, I think, shed much light upon the life of Jesus.

From the earliest historical times there have been men who believed themselves specially appointed by God to be communicators of his will, and thus saviors of the people, — among the Jews more than other nations, because their religion was established by such an individual, and their sacred writings were written or dictated by such persons, which led the readers of them to look for the appearance of others. The successful ones — those who satisfied many persons of the justice of their claim — were called prophets, messiahs, and saviors; the unsuccessful ones, enthusiasts, fanatics, and impostors; and of these the Jews have also had, as was to be expected, a large proportion. Josephus tells us of many before the time of Jesus, and since his time there have been not a few.

Many of these individuals, by withdrawing the mental force from all other objects and concentrating it upon one, have passed into a condition very superior to that of their normal state. A man who concentrates all his physical power, and uses it for walking, will pass over a hundred miles in twenty-four hours; if in swimming, he will buffet the waves, and cross the British Channel. Mentally, human beings will, however, sometimes pass into an ecstatic state, in which their ordinary powers are increased a thousand-fold; and like Joan of Arc, Peter the Hermit, Loyola, Joseph Smith, and many others, it seems utterly impossible to account for their success by any knowledge of the persons that we are able to obtain.

In the second century, Simon, or Bar Cochba ("the son of the star") as he styled himself, became a veritable king of the Jews. He pretended that the prophecy was fulfilled in him, "There shall come a star out of Jacob" (Num. xxiv. 17). He fought with success against the Romans; though Hadrian sent his best generals against him, and compelled them to evacuate Jerusalem, where he was proclaimed king, but fell eventually in a bloody struggle with the all-conquerors.

In the fifth century, one Moses appeared in the Isle of Candia, and professed to be the ancient Jewish lawgiver, descended from heaven to lead the Jews of that island through the sea to the Land of Promise. Many of the Jews jumped into the sea, expecting that it would open for them as they believed the Red Sea had done for their brethren.

In 714 a Jew called Serenus pretended to be the

Messiah, and promised to lead the Spanish Jews to Palestine, where he would set up his kingdom. Many believed in him, left their business, and followed him about, but, in the end, discovered their mistake.

Even as late as the eighteenth century, Sabati Zevi in Aleppo declared himself to be the Messiah, and had at one time eighty thousand followers. He had a forerunner of the name of Nathan, who professed to be Elias. He preached repentance to the Jews, and obedience to himself and doctrine. Many of the Jews gave themselves up wholly to prayers, alms, and devotions. So great was his popularity, that in his native city, Smyrna, he was received with full royal honors. On being imprisoned he renounced his faith, and embraced Mohammedanism; but neither this nor his death hindered the spread of the religion which he had established, remnants of which exist to this day. It is said that even his enemies could not object to the morality which he taught, while they acknowledged his pre-eminent mental ability.

Mohammed, though frequently spoken of as an impostor, seems to have been perfectly sincere in the belief that he was a divinely-appointed teacher of the people. Mohammedan authors say, that, when he was born, a splendid light shone over all Arabia. He was subject to epileptic fits, and had a strong propensity to solitary retirement and religious abstraction; frequently spending a month at a time in a cave at Mount Hara, near Mecca. Dissatisfied with the old Pagan religion of Arabia, and unable to accept Judaism or Christianity, at forty years of age he com-

menced to preach a new religion to his countrymen, beginning with his own family. This religion, he affirmed, was revealed to him by the angel Gabriel, who commanded him to spread it abroad by preaching. "Certain it is, that, after long and painful solitary broodings, a something — not clearly known to himself — at times moved him with such fearfully rapturous vehemence, that, during his revelations, he is said to have roared like a camel, and to have streamed with perspiration; his eyes turned red, and the foam stood before his mouth."[1] He who is familiar with the experiences of modern mediums, of mesmeric subjects, or of entranced persons, will recognize in this description a condition similar to some of theirs, produced principally in his case by some peculiarity of mental constitution. It is not surprising that his countrymen regarded him at first as a man out of his senses, whose words and actions were too silly to be regarded; but as his converts became numerous, and his influence increased, they denounced and fiercely opposed the man who "called their ancient gods idols, and their ancestors fools." He was earnest as a man struggling for life; and this was the result of his confidence in what, to those who have not experienced it, so often seems as the wildest fancy. He proved his sincerity by reducing himself from affluence to poverty, and frequently risking his life, but at length established a religion that in a hundred years "reigned supreme over Arabia, Syria, Persia, Egypt, and the whole of the northern coast of Africa, even as far as Spain." In the "dark

[1] Chambers's Encyclopædia, art. Mohammed.

ages," Mohammedans were the lights of the world, and the teachers of barbarous Europe; and to-day a hundred and thirty millions cry, "There is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet." Had he been unsuccessful, as thousands of fanatics have been, he would have been regarded as a madman or impostor; and, indeed, it is sometimes difficult to draw the line between fanaticism, that elevates some men to the highest position to which humanity has ever attained, and madness, that stamps others as the most unfortunate of the race.

Among religious enthusiasts and fanatics there is a great family resemblance, part of which may be attributed to conscious or unconscious imitation, but most of it to similarity of condition. George Fox, a religious enthusiast who lived about two hundred years ago, who was the founder of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, wrote a journal which reveals a great similarity between his life and that of Jesus as given in the Gospels.

George Fox was born in 1624. His father was a poor weaver, who bound him apprentice to a country shoemaker; but, when about nineteen years of age, he conceived that he was honored with a special commission from Heaven. He tells us that the Lord said unto him, "'Thou seest how young people go together into vanity, and old people into the earth; and thou must forsake all, both young and old, and keep out of all, and be as a stranger unto all.'

"Then at the command of God, on the ninth day of the seventh month, 1643, I left my relations, and brake off all familiarity or fellowship with young or old."[1]

[1] George Fox His Journal, p. 3.

For five years he rambled about the country, living occasionally in the woods, and practised long and frequent fasts, on one occasion fasting for about ten days. His days were devoted to religious meditation, and his nights frequently passed in sleepless excitement. He says, "I was often under great temptations; and I fasted much, and walked abroad in solitary places many days, and often took my Bible, and went and sate in hollow trees and lonesome places till night came on, and frequently in the night walked mournfully about by myself."[1]

"Temptations grew more and more;" and he says, "When Satan could not effect his design upon me that way, then he laid snares for me, and baits to draw me to commit some sin, whereby he might take advantage to bring me to despair." When all hope was gone, he heard a voice which said, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." Again he heard a voice saying, "Thou serpent! thou dost seek to destroy the life, but canst not; for the sword which keepeth the tree of life shall destroy thee."[2] These were probably echoes of his own soul; for they are in his style.

When about the age of twenty-three, he commenced to preach wherever he could find an opportunity; "travelling on in the Lord's service," he tells us, "as the Lord led" him. Multitudes gathered to hear the bold advocate who spoke with authority and power, and became convinced of the truth of his doctrines: though the opposition aroused among the priests and professors was at times fearful; they

[1] George Fox His Journal, p. 7. [2] Ibid., p. 8.

attacking George Fox as the scribes and Pharisees did Jesus, and for the same reason.

"His leading doctrines were the futility of learning for the work of the ministry; the presence of Christ in the heart as the 'inner light,' superseding all other lights; and the necessity of trying men's opinions and religions by the Holy Spirit, and not by the Scriptures."

Frequently, as he informs us, "the Lord spoke to him, and told him where he should go, and what he should do."

"On a certain time," he says, "as I was walking in the fields, the Lord said unto me, 'Thy name is written in the Lamb's book of life;' and, as the Lord spake it, I believed, and saw it in the new birth." [1]

"Moreover, when the Lord sent me forth into the world, he forbade me to put off my hat to any, high or low; and I was required to 'thee' and 'thou' all men and women, without any respect to rich or poor, great or small. And, as I travelled up and down, I was not to bid people good-morrow or good-evening; neither might I bow, or scrape with my leg, to any one." [2]

"Now, as I went towards Nottingham on a first day in the morning with friends to a meeting there, when I came on top of a hill in sight of the town I espied the great steeple-house; and the Lord said unto me, 'Thou must go cry against yonder great idol, and against the worshippers therein.'" [3]

Many wonderful cures were wrought by him,

[1] George Fox His Journal, p. 22. [2] Ibid., p. 24. [3] Ibid., p. 26.

which the early Quakers did not scruple to call miracles.

Of one case, George in his journal says, "Coming to Mansfield-Woodhouse, there was a distracted woman under a doctor's hand, with her hair loose all about her ears; and he was about to let her blood, she being first bound, and many people being about her, holding her by violence; but he could get no blood from her. And I desired them to unbind her, and let her alone, for they could not touch the spirit in her by which she was tormented. So they did unbind her: and I was moved to speak to her, and in the name of the Lord to bid her be quiet and still; and she was so. And the Lord's power settled her mind, and she mended, and afterwards received the truth, and continued in it to her death; and the Lord's name was honored." [1]

Put this into Gospel form, and it would read: "And, when George was entered into Mansfield-Woodhouse, behold a woman in a physician's care; for she was possessed of a devil, with her hair all loose about her ears, and many people holding her by violence. After binding her, the physician sought to bleed her; but he could not. And George said unto them, 'Unbind her, and let her alone;' for they could not touch the devil that tormented her: so they unbound her. Then said he, 'In the name of the Lord, be quiet and still;' and immediately the evil spirit left her, and she came to her right mind; and the people glorified the name of the Lord." At the close of his statement respecting this cure, he

[4] George Fox His Journal, p. 28.

informs us that "many great and wonderful things were wrought by the heavenly power in those days; for the Lord made bare his omnipotent arm, and manifested his power to the astonishment of many, by the healing virtue whereof many have been delivered from great infirmities; and the devils were made subject through his name, of which particular instances might be given beyond what this unbelieving age is able to receive or bear." We may presume, therefore, that he does not record the most wonderful deeds that were performed by him.

On another occasion, he came to a place called Twy-Cross, where he cured a man who had been given over by physicians. His own statement reads like a fragment of some lost Gospel: "Now, there was in that town a great man that had long lain sick, and was given over by the physicians: and some friends in the town desired me to go to see him; and I went up into his chamber, and spake the word of life to him, and was moved to pray by him; and the Lord was entreated, and restored him to health."[1]

Of another case of healing performed by him, he tells us in a very Gospel way: "After some time I went to a meeting at Armside, where Richard Myer was. Now, he had been long lame of one of his arms; and I was moved of the Lord to say unto him amongst all the people, 'Prophet Myer, stand up upon thy legs' (for he was sitting down). And he stood up, and stretched out his arm that had been lame a long time, and said, 'Be it known unto you, all people, that this day I am healed.' But his parents

[1] George Fox His Journal, p. 30.

could hardly believe it, but, after the meeting was done, had him aside, and took off his doublet; and then they saw it was true." [1]

As remarkable as many of the miracles related in the Gospels is the following: "When we came to Baldock in Hertfordshire, I asked if there was nothing in that town, no profession; and it was answered me, there were some Baptists, and a Baptist woman sick. John Rush of Bedfordshire went along with me to visit her; and, when we came, there were many people in the house that were tender about her; and they told me she was not a woman for this world, but, if I had any thing to comfort her concerning the world to come, I might speak to her. So I was moved of the Lord God to speak to her; and the Lord raised her up again, to the astonishment of the town and country." [2]

With a change less than the difference between Gospel accounts of the same miracle, it would read thus: "And he came to Baldock in Hertfordshire, and he asked if there were any righteous in that town; and they told him of a woman that had been baptized, but she was nigh unto death. Then he took with him John Rush of Bedfordshire, and went to the house, where they found many people, and her friends weeping around her bed; and they would not that he should speak to her, save to comfort her concerning the world to come. But George spake to her in the name of the Lord; and immediately her sickness left her, and she rose up, so that all the people were greatly astonished: and the fame of him went into all the country round about."

[1] George Fox His Journal, p. 103. [2] Ibid., p. 170.

As even the disciples of Jesus could work miracles, so was it with the disciples of George Fox. He says, "Great miracles were wrought in many places by the power of the Lord through several." [1]

Like Jesus, George Fox could also read the internal condition of many with whom he came in contact. On one occasion, some friends wished him to take a man along with him: but, though he was a total stranger, George declared him to be an impostor; which was proved by the discovery that he had been pretending to be a minister, and had stolen a priest's suit.

As the life of Jesus in the Gospels manifests the ignorance of the time in which he lived, and the prejudices of the people of his country; so the life of George Fox reveals to us the ignorance of his times, and the prejudices of the people among whom he dwelt, and which he also shared. He says, "As I was sitting in a house full of people, declaring the word of life unto them, I cast mine eye upon a woman, and I discerned an unclean spirit in her. And I was moved of the Lord to speak sharply to her, and told her she was a witch: whereupon the woman went out of the room. Now, I being a stranger there, and knowing nothing of the woman outwardly, the people wondered at it, and told me afterward that I had discovered a great thing; for all the country looked upon her to be a witch. The Lord had given me a spirit of discerning, by which I many times saw the states and conditions of people, and could try their spirits. For not long before, as

[1] George Fox His Journal, p. 167.

I was going to a meeting, I saw some women in a field, and I discerned them to be witches; and I was moved to go out of my way into the field to them, and declare unto them their conditions, telling them plainly they were in the spirit of witchcraft. At another time there came such an one into Swarthmore Hall, in the meeting-time; and I was moved to speak sharply to her, and told her she was a witch; and the people said afterwards, she was generally accounted so." And, if she had charged George with being a wizard, his enemies might have said he was generally accounted so; for he acknowledges that the people said he bewitched the people who were influenced by his doctrine.

Like most religious enthusiasts, he was also a prophet. His prophecies that did not come to pass are of course unrelated. When he was a prisoner in Lancaster Castle, there was great fear of the Turks overspreading Europe; but George tells us, "As I was walking in my prison-chamber, I saw the Lord's power turn against him, and that he was turning back again. And I declared to some what the Lord had let me see, when there were such fears of his overrunning Christendom; and within a month the news-books came down, wherein it was mentioned that they had given him a defeat."

"Another time, as I was walking in my chamber, with my eye to the Lord, I saw the angel of the Lord with a glittering drawn sword stretched southward, as though the court had been all on a fire. Not long after, the wars brake out with Holland, and the sickness brake forth, and afterwards the fire

of London: so the Lord's sword was drawn indeed." And, if those things had not occurred, other things that occurred would have appeared to him equally significant of the drawn sword, or the vision would not have been mentioned.

Some of George Fox's deeds were very extravagant; and in this respect, also, he was like all religious enthusiasts. One winter's day, about a mile from Lichfield, the Lord commanded him to pull off his shoes; which he did, and left them with some poor shepherds, who "trembled and were astonished." He then walked about a mile to the city, and went up and down the streets crying with a loud voice, "Woe to the bloody city of Lichfield!" "And, it being market-day, I went into the market-place, and to and fro in the several parts of it, and made stands, crying as before, 'Woe to the bloody city of Lichfield!' And no one laid hands on me. But, as I went thus crying through the streets, there seemed to me to be a channel of blood running down the streets, and the market-place appeared like a pool of blood." George "afterward came to understand that in the Emperor Diocletian's time a thousand Christians were martyred in Lichfield. So I was to go without my shoes through the channel of their blood, and into the pool of their blood in the market-place, that I might raise up the memorial of the blood of those martyrs, which had been shed above a thousand years before."[1] But who was to be benefited by it George does not inform us.

Yet George Fox was in many respects a noble and

[1] Preface to George Fox His Journal.

useful man. William Penn, who was well acquainted with him, testifies that "he was of an innocent life; no busybody nor self-seeker, neither touchy nor critical; . . . so meek, contented, modest, easy, steady, tender, it was a pleasure to be in his company. He exercised no authority but over evil, and that everywhere, and in all, but with love, compassion, and long-suffering. A most merciful man, as ready to forgive as unapt to take or give an offence. Thousands can truly say he was of an excellent spirit and savor among them; and, because thereof, the most excellent spirits loved him with an unfeigned and unfading love." He was evidently conscientious, and, though destitute of advanced literary culture, had a keen intellect, and on most subjects a sound judgment. He was the means of blessing millions directly and indirectly; and the Quakers, his followers, notwithstanding some ridiculous peculiarities, have been, as they are to-day, the most exemplary of all Christians.

Another remarkable religious enthusiast was Ann Lee, the founder of the Society of Shakers, whose believers regard her as a female Jesus Christ in his second appearing; the mother-spirit, whose coming was foretold in many passages of the Old and New Testament Scriptures which the Shakers quote.

She was born in Manchester, England, in 1736. Her father was a blacksmith, who, we are told, was poor, but honest and industrious. During her childhood she was employed in a cotton-factory, and subsequently was a nurse in an infirmary, "where she was distinguished for her neatness, faithfulness, prudence, and good economy."

When a child she was serious and thoughtful, "and was often favored with heavenly visions."

The marriage state was very repugnant to her; but, by the solicitation of her friends, she was induced to marry a blacksmith, by whom she had four children, who all died in infancy.

When about twenty-three years of age, her mind became very much exercised on the subject of religion. She says, "I cried to God without intermission, for three days and three nights, that he would give me *true desires*."[1] Again she says, "Soon after I set out to travel in the way of God, I labored o' nights in the work of God. Sometimes I labored all night, continually crying to God for my own redemption. Sometimes I went to bed, and slept; but in the morning, if I could not feel that sense of the work of God that I did before I slept, I would labor all night . . . In my travail and tribulation my sufferings were so great, that my flesh consumed upon my bones, bloody sweat pressed through the pores of my skin, and I became as helpless as an infant."[2] She is said to have been "wrought upon after this manner" for nine years; yet at times she had intervals during which her bodily strength was renewed, and she received "heavenly visions and divine revelations."

When thirty-four years of age "she saw Jesus Christ in open vision, who revealed to her the most astonishing views and divine manifestations of truth." We are told that she saw the cause of all

[1] Shakers and Shakerism, by F. W. Evans, p. 124.
[2] Ibid., p. 125.

human depravity, and the "act of transgression committed by Adam and Eve," which, according to her statement, was sexual intercourse; against which, and all lustful gratifications, "she bore from that time an open testimony." Henceforth "she was received by the people as a mother in spiritual things," and was called Mother Ann.

Her believers credit her with marvellous powers; and she received, according to them, many miraculous manifestations of divine favor. She "often revealed the most secret sins that were purposely kept back by such as were opening their minds before her."

"At one time a mob attempted to bind her with ropes, but were unable to do so by reason of the spiritual power by which she was exercised." [1]

She was accused of blasphemy at another time, and brought for examination before four ministers of the Church of England. They asked her to speak in other tongues; but she told them, that, unless she felt the power of God, she could not. This she soon felt, and spoke for four hours. And we are assured that the clergymen, who were great linguists, "testified that she had spoken in seventy-two different tongues." The ability of these ministers to understand the seventy-two different tongues is hardly less remarkable than her ability to speak them.

She gives the following account of God's interference in her behalf: "One of my brothers, being greatly enraged, said he was determined to overcome me: so he brought a staff about the size of a broom-

[1] Shakers and Shakerism, by F. W. Evans, p. 134.

handle, and came to me as I was sitting in a chair, singing by the power of God. He beat me over the face and nose with the staff, till one end of it was much splintered. I sensibly felt and saw the bright rays of the glory of God pass between my face and the staff, and I did but just feel the blows. He continued beating until he was so far spent that he called for drink. He then began again with the other end of the staff; and I felt my breath like healing balsam, which healed me so that I felt no harm from the strokes." [1]

She had also great healing power; and many, we are informed, by her instrumentality were healed by a word or touch.

"Sarah Kibbee of New Lebanon testifieth, that when a child she was very weakly; that her weakness finally settled in her left foot; that, beside other medical attendance, she was under the care of Dr. Millard during one whole summer, and found no relief; that her foot and leg withered, and seemed to perish; that the cords of her ham were so contracted, that she was unable to straighten her leg, or set her foot to the floor." In this condition she went to reside with the Shakers at Watervliet, where Mother Ann and the elders were. In a few days she embraced their faith, and confessed her sins. Sitting in a chair the next day, Elder William Lee "came into the room, took hold of her foot, and stroked it with his hands, saying, 'According to thy faith, so be it unto thee.' Soon after, Mother came into the room, and bade her put away her wooden

[1] Shakers and Shakerism, p. 136.

staves, and lean upon Christ." "She immediately received strength, laid away her crutches, and hath never used any since, but was restored to perfect soundness, so that her foot and leg, which before was at least one-quarter less than the other, was in every respect restored equal with the other. She went forth in the worship of God afterwards to work, and hath never felt the least symptom of her old infirmity from that day to this."[1] This was twenty-seven years after the cure. To the declaration of the girl herself, which is attested by four witnesses, is added the testimony of a person in whose presence the "miraculous cure was wrought."

Then we have the testimony of a woman who was afflicted with a cancer, which was cured by "Mother Ann" placing her finger upon it; when instantly the pain left her, and she was never afflicted with it afterward.

When thirty-eight years of age, Ann Lee left England for America, accompanied by her husband and several believers in the Shaker doctrine. While on board the vessel, they sang and danced according to their custom; which so offended the captain, that he threatened to throw them overboard. Soon after, a storm arose, the vessel sprang a leak, and the water gained upon them very fast. "The whole crew were greatly alarmed; and the captain turned as pale as a corpse, and said all would perish before morning. But Ann Lee retained her confidence, and said, 'Captain, be of good cheer: there shall not a hair of our heads perish: we shall arrive safe in America.

[1] Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing (1823), p. 44.

I just saw two bright angels of God standing by the mast, through whom I received this promise.'" [1] This might have been written by the evangelist Luke concerning Jesus or Paul, and it would have harmonized well with the other marvellous accounts recorded of them.

Ann Lee died at the age of forty-eight, but not before she had laid the foundation for the various Shaker communities that at present exist, among whom she is regarded as a mother indeed. Some of her sayings have been recorded, and show her on many subjects to have possessed a sound and practical judgment.

She inculcated economy, for which the Shakers are noted, thus: "You must be prudent and saving of every good thing that God blesses you with, that you may have to give to the needy."

Of children she said, "Little children are innocent, and they should never be brought out of it. If brought up in simplicity, they would receive good as easily as evil. Do not blame them for every little fault. . . . Never speak to them in a passion: it will put devils into them. When I was a child, my mind was taken up with things of God, so that I saw heavenly visions instead of trifling toys. Do all your work as though you had a thousand years to live, and as though you were going to die to-morrow." [2]

She promised blessings to those who obeyed what she called the gospel, — that is, Shaker doctrine: they were to be kings and priests unto God; while those

[1] Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing, p. 140.
[2] Ibid., p. 148.

that did not were to suffer the terrible penalties of their disobedience. There is no doubt that this woman was sincere, truthful, on many subjects well informed; able to magnetize many persons who came within the sphere of her influence, and to cure the diseases of some who had confidence in her; and could we but see her through the medium of twenty centuries of worship, and as her Shaker biographers represent her, she might appear to us as she does to the Shakers, — the mother-spirit and a savior. Yet she was unable to read or write, and, with all her talk about purity, was a tobacco slave, smoking a pipe to the day of her death. This fact alone, we might suppose, would be sufficient to satisfy every clean person that she could never have been chosen for any special purpose by a God of purity.

Richard Brothens of England announced himself, in 1793, as the apostle of a new religion, "the nephew of the Almighty, and prince of the Hebrews, appointed to lead them to the land of Canaan." The next year he published a book entitled "A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times," in which he says, "It is from visions and revelations, and through the Holy Ghost, that I write this book for the benefit of all men: therefore, to say it is false, that I am mad, am an impostor, have a devil, or am out of my senses, constitutes the dangerous sin of blasphemy."

Persons of liberal education and good ability maintained the divinity of his mission. Among them were Nathaniel Brassy Halhed, member of Parliament for Lymington, and William Sharp, an eminent

engraver. Halhed bore testimony to his prophesying correctly the death of the three emperors of Germany. Of his prophecies "The Penny Cyclopædia" says, "Many of them have been either totally or partially fulfilled." He was at length, by order of the government, confined in Bethlehem Hospital as a dangerous lunatic. He passed from the condition of an enthusiast to that of a fanatic, and to the stage beyond fanaticism, which is lunacy.

Joanna Southcote was another religious fanatic, whose followers, many of whom were intelligent and respectable, at one time numbered one hundred thousand. She had frequent visions, and made many prophetic annunciations. Her prophecies commanded universal attention, and some of them received a remarkable fulfilment. When she was sixty years of age, she announced that she was to become the mother of the Shiloh, the great Deliverer, in 1814; and, in anticipation of his advent, her followers provided an expensive cradle. This was not fulfilled; and she died on the 27th of December in that year, having declared just previous to her death, that, if she was deceived, it was by some spirit good or evil. "The number of her followers continued to be very great for many years after her death: they believed that there would be a resurrection of her body, and that she was still to be the mother of the promised Shiloh." [1] When in London thirty-four years ago, I heard a preacher advocating her claims; nor is the sect of Southcotians extinct to this day.

Joseph Smith, the most remarkable religious en-

[1] English Cyclopædia of Biography, art. Joanna Southcote.

thusiast of recent times, was regarded in his youth as visionary and fanatical. He used to spend hours in prayer and meditation, and professed to receive angelic visits. Referring to the 21st of September, 1823, he says, "It seemed as though the house was filled with consuming fire. In a moment a personage stood before me, with a countenance like lightning, and visible to the extremities of the body, who proclaimed himself to be an angel of God." He told Smith that the covenant which God made with ancient Israel was at hand to be fulfilled; that the preparatory work for the second coming of the Messiah was speedily to commence; that the time was at hand for the gospel to be preached in its power and fulness to all nations; and that Smith was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to help bring in this glorious time.

There are now said to be two hundred thousand Mormons, who regard Joseph Smith with nearly as much reverence as Christians do Jesus. As a community they are not excelled for industry, temperance, and general prosperity, by any people in the world; though their belief in the divine inspiration of Joseph Smith has led them into polygamy, and all the curses that flow from such a barbarous practice.

The fourteenth article of their creed is, "We believe in being honest, true, chaste, temperate, benevolent, virtuous, and upright, and in doing good to all men; also that an idle or lazy person cannot be a Christian, or have salvation." I know of no other Christian creed that contains as sensible an article as that.

With such individuals as Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Mohammed, George Fox, Swedenborg, Ann Lee, and others of similar character, though superior in some respects, as I think, to all of them, I class Jesus of Nazareth. The irregularities of his life, indicated by the accounts of the evangelists, could not but interfere with the normal manifestations of his mind, had it been otherwise regular; while they manifest the enthusiasm that characterizes those persons who claim to have special revelations from God.

Before Jesus commenced his public ministrations, we are informed by three of the evangelists that he fasted forty days and forty nights. According to the description given, he appears to have been alone; and we may consider that the account came from himself. It seems probable, that under the influence of great religious excitement, intensified by the preaching and baptism of John, Jesus withdrew to the wilderness, and attempted to fast as Moses is said to have done, when for "forty days and forty nights he did neither eat bread nor drink water." His fasting, added to the previous excitement, probably threw him into the condition of trance; for this seems best to explain what follows. Bring this story of the temptation to the nineteenth century and New England, and how will it appear to us? You meet a pious, enthusiastic young man of your acquaintance, whom you have not seen for six or seven weeks; and, as you shake hands with him, you inquire where he has been. "I've been," says he, "in the wilderness." — "What induced you to go to the wilderness?" — "The Spirit led me there, to be

tempted of the Devil." — "What temptations did he present to you?" — "After I had eaten nothing for nearly six weeks, and was hungry, he came to me and said, 'If thou art the Son of God, make these granite bowlders into bread;' but I said, 'It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' Then the Devil took me to Boston, and set me upon the summit of the State House, and told me to throw myself down, for he said the angels would bear me up; but I said, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' At last he took me to the top of Mount Washington, and showed me all the countries of the world and their glory, and offered to give them all to me if I would fall down and worship him: but I said, 'Begone, Satan! for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' Then he departed, and I saw him no more; and angels came and communicated with me."

Let any man tell us such a story as this, and what would our opinion of him be? Could we do less than regard him as extravagant, and even fanatical? If we are to place any confidence in this account, Jesus must have told such a story as this; and it is but one of a number of statements made by the evangelists with regard to him that indicate that Jesus belonged to the class of religious enthusiasts.

In Luke vi. 12 we read of his continuing all night in prayer. On another occasion, referred to by Matthew (Matt. xiv. 23), he went on to a mountain to pray, and did not return to his disciples before the fourth watch of the night, or about six the next morning.

Inordinate fasting and prayer are generally associated with religious fanaticism, as they were in the case of Mohammed, George Fox, Joseph Smith, and others.

After driving the money-changers out of the temple (John ii. 13–15), the Jews very properly asked Jesus for a sign by which they might know that he had authority from God to do such things: he replied (John ii. 19), "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." There was, of course, no probability of its destruction by them, and hence none of its reconstruction by him; but such extravagant language indicates the condition of the man from whom it proceeded.

John's Gospel, it is true, informs us that Jesus meant the temple of his body; but it also tells us (22d verse) that the disciples only thought of this after his resurrection. If he did mean his body, and even his disciples did not understand him until after his supposed resurrection, how could the Jews understand him? and what propriety was there in thus talking in riddles to them?

Many of the sayings of Jesus are very extravagant: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on" (Matt. vi. 25). That he really means what he says, his illustrations show: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for rai-

ment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin. . . . Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, . . . shall he not much more clothe you?"

This is the language of one who lives in a miraculous world created by his imagination. A man can add nothing to his height by thinking about it; but he can add materially to his wardrobe by thinking about his clothes, and acting accordingly; and he cannot do the necessary action without thought.

"Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Matt. v. 42); "Lend, hoping for nothing again" (Luke vi. 35); "Of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again" (Luke vi. 30).

For men who had nothing to give or to lend, this was doubtless a very pleasant Gospel; for they could only be benefited by its acceptance: but, unless Jesus intended that his followers should form a community, such ideas presented for universal acceptance are exceedingly extravagant, and to embody them in daily life is utterly impossible.

"If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And, if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire." And in Mark is added, "into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" which was very probably the original expression.

We are told that this has a spiritual meaning. But what kind of a spiritual meaning can we gather from such a passage? The only spiritual meaning that can be legitimately drawn from it is, that something as valuable, as useful, and as natural, as a hand, a foot, or an eye, if it troubles or insnares us, should be destroyed, so that we may escape everlasting fire. Such a doctrine, carried out, would make eunuchs of more than half of mankind. It would be much better to teach people to make a good use of all their organs and powers, rather than to cut them off or destroy them.

Then we have many such extravagant expressions as these: "Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." We may naturally conclude that the faith of Jesus was of the undoubting kind. But Hermon shows to-day his snow-streaked head, Carmel's ridge overlooks the Mediterranean, and Tabor's cone still greets the traveller's eye, as when Mary's boy ran barefoot over the hills of Galilee. A mountain moved at the command of Jesus would have done more to establish his claim than all his so-called miracles, had they been multiplied a thousand-fold.

In the tenth chapter of Luke we are told that Jesus sent out seventy disciples to preach and heal; and they returned with joy, telling him that even the devils were subject to them through his name. Jesus says, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Be-

hold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you." A man that nothing could hurt would be an immortal man, that fire could not burn, knife cut, fall bruise, or water drown. One such man presenting himself before the Jewish people, and allowing them to test his power, would have done more to establish the claim of Jesus than all he did; made it, indeed, unquestionable. They fasten him to a stake, and heap up fagots which blaze around him; but he walks out unharmed, treading the ashes beneath his feet. They tie a millstone to his neck, and cast him into the lake; but in a few minutes he swims safely to shore. They cut at him with their swords, but are unable to see the slightest wound. They thrust spears into him; but they leave no more impression than they would on water. From the top of a tower they drop an immense stone upon his head: the stone passes through him; he smiles, and walks on. Single-handed, such a man would have annihilated the whole Roman army, and the world would have been at his mercy.

Nowhere is the extravagance of Jesus more evident than in the following passage: "If any man come unto me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke xiv. 26). This is not the language of an impostor, nor is it what any friend of Jesus would be likely to attribute to him unless he really said it, or something closely resembling it. It must be one of his genuine utterances; and yet what can be more extravagant

and unnatural? I do not wonder, when such sayings as these are taken into account, that even his friends, as we are informed in Mark iii. 21, thought he was deranged, and that many of the Jews said (John x. 20), "He hath a devil, and is mad: why hear ye him?"

Jesus manifests also an overweening egotism that is very common with religious enthusiasts, and is frequently an inducing cause of their extravagant pretensions. His organ of self-esteem must have been either very large, or it was unnaturally excited. Indeed, it seems very probable that in the latter part of his life the whole coronal region of the brain was highly excited, and self-esteem in consequence of its proximity to the neighboring faculties. After casting out devils, the scribes said (Mark iii. 22) that he did it by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. This he calls blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and declares that it never can be forgiven, though all other sins and blasphemies should be forgiven. The greatest of all crimes, in the eyes of Jesus, was to deny his claims; and the greatest of all virtues, to accept them.

The very commencement of his preaching manifests this self-esteem: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark i. 15); or as Benjamin Wilson more correctly, as I think, translates it in his Emphatic Diaglott, "The time has been accomplished, and God's royal majesty has approached." When the Pharisees asked him when the kingdom of God should come, he answers, "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke xvii. 21); or, as it reads in the margin, "*among* you;" or, as Wil-

son translates the whole passage, "God's royal majesty is among you."

The text for most of the sermons of Jesus is himself. Not more truly did Paul preach Jesus than Jesus preached himself. The kingdom of heaven of which he discourses is the kingdom that he establishes, and of which he is at times the king, and at other times the king's son. The least in that kingdom, according to him, is greater than the greatest in any other kingdom. He was possessed with the idea that he was the Messiah, and he gave his life to its realization. He preached, for the Messiah was to preach; he healed, for the Messiah was to heal; he did not seek to escape his fate, for the Messiah was to be numbered with the transgressors, and to be cut off.

Had all the lost Gospels been preserved, I think we should have had many manifestations of this egotism that are wanting in our present Gospels; still more if we could have had an accurate report of his sayings. John the disciple never wrote the Gospel of John, nor was it written till long after the death of Jesus; but although written late, and not by a Jew, and differing widely from the synoptic Gospels, it evidently gives us many of the actual sayings of the Nazarene that had escaped previous collectors. It appears to contain much that came originally from some one well acquainted with many of the facts. As Jesus is represented in John, he and God are in company, and no man can come to the Father but by him. So closely are they connected, that God will give whatever is asked for in the name of Jesus.

He says, "I am the bread of life;" "I came down from heaven;" "All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." Is it surprising that men who accept these extravagant claims believe in the Godhead of Jesus? Again he says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." The man who threatens those who do not believe in him shows his inability to lead them to believe by proper means, and is to be suspected; for he is trying to shut their eyes, and induce them to accept his leadership before their reason is convinced, or in opposition to their reason. He is the last man in whom enlightened men of the present day would have confidence. The intelligent Pharisees who heard Jesus no doubt thought, if they did not say, "I care not where you came from, nor whose son you are: if you can teach us any truth, we are here to receive it, and shall be most thankful for it; but we are not to be blinded by your extravagant pretensions, and thus receive as truth what is merely the product of your imagination."

He also informs us (Matt. vii. 22) that many will say to him in the last day, "Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Men have associated such language with the idea of the Godhead of Jesus, and thus disguised its extreme arrogance.

When a Roman centurion called him Lord (Matt.

viii. 8), and said he was not worthy that Jesus should come under his roof, but desired him to speak the word, and his servant should be healed, this so gratified him, contrasted as it must have been in his mind with the treatment that he had received from the Jews, that he declared he had not found so great faith, — no, not in Israel. "Many shall come," he adds, "from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven: but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth." It is evident that those who were to come from the east and west, and receive the heavenly privileges, were those who believed in and accepted him; and those children of the kingdom who were to be cast into outer darkness were those who could not believe in, and had therefore rejected him.

The idea of Jesus is, that even Gentiles who acknowledged his pretensions should receive God's favor, and live in his kingdom of delights; while the Jews who rejected him should be cast out forever. The faith of Jesus in his Messiahship swallowed up his patriotism, and greatly modified his religion.

On one occasion Jesus asks his disciples (Matt. xvi. 13), "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" They tell him that some say he is John the Baptist. That does not interest him much: he has already said that he who was least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than John. "Some Elias, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." That is better; but it falls far short of the estimate that he

has of himself; and he says, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter answers, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." This strikes the chord of his self-esteem, and it vibrates at once, and fills his soul with delight; and he breaks out in extravagant praise of Peter: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." He tells him that he is Peter, or "rock," as the name signifies; and that upon this rock he will build his church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and he then adds, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This illiterate and by no means impeccable Galilean fisherman is made earthly keeper of the heavenly gate. If he binds a soul on earth, heaven finds him securely bound as Peter left him. The Pope's infallibility grows as naturally from such statements as oaks from acorns. What had Peter done to secure such an enviable position? Nothing, save to gratify his Master's self-esteem; and he was just as ready to deny Jesus as to acknowledge him when circumstances pressed him sorely; while Jesus was just as ready to say to Peter when he offended him, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matt. xvi. 23). But the other day, Peter was greater than the angels; and now he is the very devil!

Nothing but absolute devotion satisfies Jesus: he

can brook no rivals. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is unworthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is unworthy of me" (Matt. x. 37). When one says, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father," promising then to follow him, Jesus replies, "Let the dead bury their dead: follow thou me." Filial respect is eclipsed by the shadow of this colossus. All things are of the smallest importance compared with belief in and obedience to him.

The disciples of Jesus dispute about who shall be greatest; but this cannot be allowed. "One is your Master," says he, "even Christ; and all ye are brethren." It is a matter of no importance what your relative relations may be; but never forget that I am the Master. They can only be his friends, he tells them, by doing what he commands them. In other words, no man can be his friend who is not first his servant. If any man will come after him, he must deny *himself*, and take up his cross, and follow him (Matt. xvi. 24). A man had better deny all men and all gods rather than deny himself. Then he plainly declares that he who would save his life, and refuses to do this, will lose it; but whosoever would lose his life for his sake should find it. He asks, "What is he profited who gains the whole world, and loses his soul?" — the man who saves his soul being the man who denies himself, and follows Jesus; while the man who does not, from fear of consequences or from love of independence, is to lose his soul! Alas! the man who does deny himself has lost his soul already.

It is true he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Divine words they seem, and full of comfort to the burdened soul who is ready to fall upon the bosom of the Christly comforter, till he hears, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me;" and the true man shrinks from one who promises rest, but imposes yokes. The rest of Jesus is only for those who bow to his authority, and acknowledge him as their Master.

Jesus denounces those who do not believe in him, and reject him, as religious fanatics so generally do. Mohammed says, "Surely they who believe not, and die in their unbelief, upon them shall be the curse of God and of the angels and of all men; they shall remain under it forever; their punishment shall not be alleviated, neither shall they be regarded; . . . their dwelling-place shall be the fire of hell, and the receptacle of the wicked shall be miserable."

Jesus says, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." The principal people of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, fishing-towns on the Galilean lake, paid but little attention to his doctrine, or, in the language of Matthew, "they repented not;" and he thus fulminates his anathemas against them: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for, if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you." Capernaum, exalted to heaven, is to be brought down to hell; and it is to be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment.

It is common for religious fanatics to denounce all others, and warn their followers against them. Moseilama, the greatest rival prophet whom Mohammed's success called into activity, once wrote to him, "Moseilama the apostle of God to Mohammed the apostle of God, — Now let the earth be half mine and half thine." Mohammed replied as laconically, "Mohammed the apostle of God to Moseilama the liar, — The earth is God's: he giveth it to such of his servants as he pleaseth, and they who fear him shall prosper."

"Who is more wicked," saith Mohammed, "than he who forgeth a lie concerning God? or who saith, 'This was revealed unto me,' when nothing has been revealed unto him?" He threatens them with an ignominious punishment in the day when the pangs of death shall seize them; never thinking that other men might believe just as honestly as himself that they had messages from God. Moses warns the Israelites against false prophets, and declares (Deut. xiii. 1–5), that if they even performed signs and wonders, but taught the people to follow other gods, they should be put to death. Jesus says, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers;" referring, probably, to the many pretended Messiahs that had preceded him. And again, "If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not; for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders." But if they show great signs and wonders, and signs and wonders are the evidences of a man's messiahship, why should not men regard them as true Christs

and prophets? In the eyes of a fanatic, he is a true prophet who says the fanatic is one; and he who denies, it matters not what he may teach or do, is a false prophet, and to be denounced.

When sceptics came and very reasonably asked him for a sign of his Messiahship, he called them "an evil and adulterous generation," and declared that no sign should be given them. If any man should in this day set up for a miraculously sent messenger of God, we should very naturally ask him for the evidence; and, if he abused us for so doing, our faith in him would certainly not be increased by his conduct.

The scribes and Pharisees, who were more critical than the fishermen of Galilee, and less disposed, therefore, to cry hosanna, receive his supreme malediction. He calls them "hypocrites, blind guides, fools;" he compares them to "whited sepulchres," and exclaims, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Had Jesus been what he professed to be, he could have satisfied the scribes and Pharisees of his messiahship, and they would, without doubt, have received him gladly; but his whole manner must have convinced them that he was not the Messiah their prophets had led them to expect, and they could do no other than reject him.

Jesus is not satisfied with cursing his rejecters in this life, but, like Mohammed, threatens them with damnation in another world. This is the most terrible thing that a religious enthusiast can do. Had Jesus been a philosopher, he would have known that the judgment can only be convinced by evidence, and that some persons, by virtue of their mental consti-

tution, demand much more evidence than others. But of this he knew nothing, or he never would have said, "He that believeth not shall be damned." As that sound goes out, there goes with it the death-knell of reason. Following it come austere monk, superstitious nun, infallible pope, rack and gibbet, the burning martyr, and the long night of the dark ages. This is the root of Christian intolerance, which bore for ages, and still bears, most deadly fruit.

In the last day, those who have fed, clothed, and visited the believers in him are to ascend into his kingdom, and enjoy eternal life; but those who have neglected or refused to feed, clothe, or visit the believers in him are to depart from his presence into "everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 31–46). Blessed believers! they not only save themselves, but every one who is charitable to them. But woe unto those who have neither believed nor assisted the believers! their dwelling-place will be the fiery pit, whose flames are everlasting, and their companions the Devil and his slaves.

Like most fanatics, he also makes extravagant promises to those who believe in and obey him.

Mohammed promises to every believer eighty thousand servants, and seventy-two girls of paradise, besides his own former wives if he should wish for them. He is to dwell in a tent adorned with pearls, jacinths, and emeralds; three hundred dishes are to be set before each at once, and the last morsel is to be as pleasant to the taste as the first; there will also be an abundance of wine, but it will be of a kind

that will not intoxicate; he will be clothed in the richest silks and brocades, which will grow on the trees of paradise; and he will be forever young, to enjoy all these things.

The promises of Jesus, though less sensual, are more inviting. To his disciples he says, "Ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes" (Luke xxii. 28–30). What a magnificent promise for fishermen who were too poor to pay their taxes! The throne of the Cæsars could never have looked as inviting as the Jewish kingdom here promised, — each a prince, to sit on a throne, and sway a sceptre over a tribe, and sit at the same table and eat and drink with the Universal Lord.

Some of them had left all, and followed him; and to these he makes this comforting promise: "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Matt. xix. 29). For every house, a hundred houses; for every brother, a hundred brothers; for every wife, a hundred wives; for every child, a hundred children; for every farm, a hundred farms; and eternal life! Who that believed could refuse to abandon all for Jesus? The impossibility of this never seems to have staggered the credulous disciples, who followed gladly the man, who, though so poor that he had not where to lay his head, was yet rich in magnificent promises.

Again he says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John xv. 7). That is comprehensive; it is exhaustive. It furnishes a supply commensurate with the needs of body and soul now and forever. Had there been any truth in the statement, one of these poor Galilean wanderers could have saved the whole Jewish people; and surely the desire to do it could not have been wanting.

WHAT MADE JESUS AN ENTHUSIAST?

First, doubtless, some peculiarity of mental or spiritual constitution, with whose nature we are but little acquainted. The form that it took in Jesus was in consequence of the belief that he had in his Messiahship. The Jews, weaker than the surrounding nations, could only expect to cope with them by supernatural help, which they believed had been repeatedly granted to their nation; and whenever they were overpowered and oppressed, as they supposed on account of their sins, they still hoped for deliverance by the arm of the "Lord of hosts." Their hopes centred in the idea of a Messiah, a great deliverer and savior, anointed or consecrated by Jehovah to restore their country to a condition of prosperity, and give the Jews universal dominion. About the time of the advent of Jesus, the nation, under the heel of Rome, was looking for this deliverer, who alone could bring consolation to Israel. Dr. Keim says, "It becomes clear, that the cry of Messiah, the Christ, of the kingdom of the great King, the kingdom of Heaven, the throne and seed of David, all these old

sayings of the prophets, continued in the later books of Daniel, Enoch, the Sibylline Books, the psalms of Solomon, and also in the Targumim, formulated and sown broadcast among the people, were on every man's lips in the days of John the Baptist and of Jesus, in Judæa, in Galilee, and even in Samaria: on the one hand, in the people's mouth, and in that of the Pharisees, as the son of David, who should be their political king and leader; on the other, in the mouth of John, of Jesus, and of his disciples, as a spiritual savior. For the cry was uttered in very necessity, and it was proclaimed by each man as he was able to understand it."[1]

The mother of Jesus was influenced by this, as her parents must have been before her. Jesus was probably begotten to be the Messiah, carried by his mother while big with the expectation that her child would be the Messiah, born in Bethlehem to be the Messiah, trained by his mother to be the Messiah. It is no wonder that he became possessed by the idea, the ruling idea of his life; and that, more than all else, made him the enthusiast that he was. This belief permeated his whole being; it assisted in giving him that lofty and egotistic attitude which he so frequently assumed; it inspired his language, and moulded his life: and, unless we bear this in mind as we read the Gospels, we are unable to account for much that this idea makes perfectly clear.

The Book of Enoch, quoted by Jude, who is supposed to have been the brother of Jesus, shows the opinion of the writer, and probably of the Jews of

[1] Keim's Jesus of Nazara, vol. i. p. 315.

his time, regarding the Messiah. If Jude was the brother of Jesus, Enoch may have been a family book in the home of Joseph; and we can imagine Jesus reading, while yet a boy, with great eagerness, many of its passages, drinking in their spirit, and subsequently breathing them out in his discourses. The Messiah, according to this book, is the Son of God: God is represented as saying, "I and *my son* will forever hold communion with them in the paths of uprightness" (chap. civ. 2).[1] Jesus frequently represents himself as the Son of God, while at the same time he more frequently calls himself the Son of man. He is to sit on "the throne of his glory" in the day of judgment: all nations are to be gathered before him; he is to separate them, and drive the wicked from his presence. The Book of Enoch, a hundred years before, had assigned this work to the Son of man. "He sat upon the *throne of his glory;* and the principal part of the judgment was assigned to him, the *Son of man.* Sinners shall disappear and perish from the face of the earth, while those who seduced them shall be bound with chains forever" (chap. lxviii. 29). "This *Son of man*, whom thou beholdest, shall raise up kings and the mighty from their couches, and the powerful from their thrones. He shall hurl kings from their thrones and their dominions, because they will not exalt and praise him, nor humble themselves before him, by whom their kingdoms were granted to them. . . . Darkness shall be their habitation, and worms shall be their bed" (chap. xlvi. 3, 4).

[1] Book of Enoch, translated by Archbishop Lawrence. Oxford, 3d edition.

Jesus taught that he existed before he came into the world: "Before Abraham was, I am." The Book of Enoch teaches the pre-existence of the Messiah: "From the beginning the Son of man existed in secret, whom the Most High preserved in the presence of his power, and revealed to the elect" (chap. lxi. 10). "Before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of heaven were formed, his name was invoked in the presence of the Lord of spirits" (chap. xlviii. 3).

The sentence which Jesus pronounces upon the wicked is, to go into "everlasting fire," to be cast into "a furnace of fire," where the pain is to be so great, that there will be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Such a doctrine he did not find in the Old Testament; but he may have found it in the Book of Enoch, where it is very plainly set forth: "Has it not been shown to them, when to the receptacle of the dead their souls shall be made to descend, their evil deeds shall become their greatest torment? Into darkness, into the snare, and into the flame which shall burn to the great judgment, shall their spirits enter; and the great judgment shall take effect forever and forever" (chap. ciii. 5). "With disgrace, with slaughter, and in extreme penury, shall their spirits be thrust into a *furnace of fire*" (chap. xcvi. 11). "Woe to you, ye sinners! for with the words of your mouths, and with the work of your hands, have you acted impiously: in the flame of a blazing fire shall you be burnt" (chap. xcix. 7). "Shall then cast them into a furnace of blazing fire" (chap. liii. 6).

The writer of the Book of Enoch was largely indebted to the book of Daniel, — a work written, not by Daniel, but by some boastful Jew, probably about a hundred years before the Book of Enoch. Jesus was no doubt indebted to both; and by reading them we may see whence came some of the features of the grand idea which so completely possessed him.

After looking over the temple with his disciples, (Matt. xxiv.), and admiring the massive stones of which it was composed, Jesus makes the remark, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down." The disciples ask him when it shall be; what shall be the sign of his coming, and the end of the world. His reply would be very likely to impress itself upon the memory of those who heard; for it contains much that must have been of great interest to them. From it we can obtain an idea of the grand position that he supposed himself to occupy, the magnificent destiny that awaited him, and see the images that were presented to his glowing imagination, — the key to so much in his life (Matt. xxiv., xxv.). After a time of tribulation and anguish, which should, however, be short, the sun is to be darkened, the moon to withhold her light, and the stars to fall from heaven; and the Son of man to come with the clouds of heaven, and all the holy angels with him, with power and great glory; and all the tribes of the earth are to mourn. The Son of man will send his angels, who, with a great sound of a trumpet, shall gather his elect from one end of heaven to the other. Then he will sit on the throne of his glory, and all nations will be

gathered before him; and he will separate them as a shepherd does the sheep and goats, placing the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left. Those on the right hand are his friends, — those who have believed in and assisted him or his followers: those on his left hand are his personal enemies, who have rejected him, or neglected his followers. He pronounces the sentence in the presence of all earth and heaven; and they go to everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

With this magnificent pageant almost constantly before his mind, he was lifted above the people that surrounded him, and spoke at times as if already seated upon that throne, and wielding the destinies of all mankind. The commencement of his public ministrations was the beginning of that kingdom of God, or heaven as he sometimes terms it; and its consummation will be when he comes in the clouds of heaven. When he says, "The kingdom of God is among you," — not "within you," as King James's translators make it, — he refers to its advent in his own person. When the mother of James and John craves a place for her children on each side of him in his kingdom, he does not say, "You are mistaken with regard to the nature of my kingdom." They evidently had the ideas on the subject that Jesus had taught them. When we read (Mark viii. 38) that whoever is ashamed of him and of his words he will be ashamed of when he comes in the glory of his Father and the holy angels, we can see the lofty eminence on which he stands, and views the pygmies at the foot. We can see what is meant when he

says, "Whoever gives a cup of cold water to another because he belongs to him shall not lose his reward;" and why he says it will be better for a man to be sunk in the sea, with a millstone about his neck, than to offend one of his little ones.

It was the most magnificent idea that was ever held by a sane mind; and no man, less intellectual, broad, and self-reliant, could have been as true to this lofty ideal as Jesus was. He never loses sight of it. It is the sun that illumines his way at every step. The parables of the great supper, of the householder, of the tares, of the net, of the ten virgins, and of the talents, have this for their basis. It is the text of most of his discourses. When the Roman centurion displays great faith in Jesus, while his own brethren rejected him with scorn, and he says, "Many shall come from the east and west," &c., in imagination he sits upon the throne of his glory, welcomes his friends, and punishes his enemies. At the last supper he declares he will drink no more wine till he drinks it new in the kingdom of God, where he expected to reign as King of kings, his disciples seated upon twelve subordinate thrones ruling over the twelve tribes of Israel, and Jesus and they enjoying all the bliss that God can bestow.

As a result of this belief, Jesus supposed that the end of the world was very near. He expected to come in the clouds of heaven before his disciples could visit all the cities of Israel (Matt. x. 23). This is probably the reason why he never established any church, or made provision for its establishment; why he never wrote his ideas, and why he never

married; why he cared so little about making proselytes; and perhaps is one reason why he displayed so little suavity to those who differed from him in opinion.

The disciples imbibed this idea of the nearness of the end from Jesus. "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. iv. 7). "We look for new heavens and a new earth" (2 Pet. iii. 13). "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas. v. 8). "Little children, it is the last time" (1 John ii. 18). But, as the Lord came not, they resorted to the explanation, which some even offer to day, which makes Jesus guilty of deceiving millions of his trusting believers: "A day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." When gods converse with gods, they may use divine language; but, when they talk to men, they must speak according to our understanding of words, or they cannot fail to deceive us.

DID JESUS DIE UPON THE CROSS?

But we are told that the resurrection of Jesus demonstrates that he was no mere enthusiast, but was in reality what he claimed; "God having demonstrated his Messiahship by raising him from the dead."

The resurrection has well been regarded as the very foundation of Christianity. Well did Paul write, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." So fundamental did he regard the doctrine, that he declares, "If Christ is not risen, those who have fallen asleep in

Christ [or, in other words, those Christians who had died] have perished, and the believers in him are of all men most miserable." It is evident, that, if the resurrection of Jesus had been taken from the Christianity of Paul, there would have been nothing left but a ruin.

I think, however, that very few intelligent unprejudiced persons, at the age of maturity, can accept the literal resurrection of the body of Jesus on such evidence as the Gospels furnish.

If Jesus really died upon the cross, his spirit departed from the body on Friday afternoon. Where was he during the thirty-six hours that intervened between his death and resurrection? Was he a pure spirit travelling over the earth? or was he unconscious? for, according to his statement to Mary Magdalene after his resurrection, he had not ascended to heaven. The body is only the drapery of the man: when Jesus died, he laid the drapery down. Did he, after being absent from the body for thirty-six hours, return, and take it up again? and, if he did, what became of it when he finally left it and ascended to heaven? for surely few intelligent persons can believe that Jesus passed into the spiritual state with his material body. In addition to this, the conduct of Jesus after his supposed resurrection is not at all what we might reasonably expect had the resurrection been real. Why should he spend the first day in merely speaking a few words to Mary Magdalene, the "other women," and Peter, a few hours toward evening with two of his disciples, and then make a short visit to the eleven at night? Why

did he not visit his heart-broken mother, and console her? If Jesus rose with his physical body, flesh, blood, and bones, that body must have required space, clothes, and food: shelter would be necessary for it, and sleep would be required. Where did Jesus lodge? How was he occupied from the first Sunday, when he appeared to his disciples, until the next, when he appeared again?

In Acts it is declared that he did not ascend for forty days, — nearly six weeks; and yet during that time, judging from the Gospel accounts, he was seen altogether not more than a few hours. In six weeks' time he might have visited every town in Judæa and Galilee, confronted and converted his enemies, and ministered consolation to multitudes of waiting souls. He could have appeared to Pilate, and melted the old Roman down with one glance of his eye. The whole Jewish Sanhedrim at the sight of the death-conqueror would have cried, "He is the Messiah, and we are his disciples!" A look at that face, upon which his enemies spit, and which the soldiers struck, would have brought them in a moment to their knees. Why should the Lord of life and death, who had conquered the grave, merely appear like a meteor for a moment to a dozen of his friends, and then "vanish out of their sight" before a single unbeliever could obtain a glimpse of him?

Some persons suppose that the disciples of Jesus stole his body away, and then invented the stories of his resurrection, as the Jews probably supposed, after they heard of his re-appearance. These ignorant and simple-hearted Galileans, trembling for their own

lives, the boldest denying him when they thought that their leader was dead, were not the men to attempt such a thing; and, if they had, the Gospels would have been the last books in which we should find that they doubted and disbelieved in the resurrection after they had heard it from their friends, and even after they had seen the man.

That many followers of Jesus did believe that they had seen the man alive whom they knew to have been crucified, appears evident. How otherwise shall we account for the wide acceptance of the resurrection of Jesus at so early a period? It must have been the result of the preaching of men who were in earnest, and to whom something must have occurred to make them so. The rapid spread of Christianity, of which this is the basic doctrine, is difficult to account for, unless something occurred to satisfy the early propagators of it that Jesus, whom they had seen to all appearance dead, had afterward appeared to them alive.

Mohammedanism, it is true, spread with great rapidity after it was established: but Mohammed was evidently sincere in the belief that he received revelations from the angel Gabriel, and this sincerity seems to have been the mainspring of his power; while a comparatively long life, and an appeal to arms in which his fanatical believers were generally successful, helped materially to spread his faith.

Many believe that the spirit of Jesus appeared to his disciples, and they in their ignorance supposed it to be his veritable body. Spiritual appearances today are too common for us to doubt of their possibil-

ity in past time. But, if we accept the spiritual appearance of Jesus, how shall we then account for the disappearance of the body, in which all the evangelists agree, and the general belief in the resurrection, which could only take place as the result of the disappearance of the body? And if we accept the statement that he ate with the disciples, and that he claimed to have flesh and bones, his appearance could not have been a spiritual one. Then there is the difficulty for him to find a suitable medium through whom to make such remarkable materializing manifestations as in that case he must have done; or the improbability of all his disciples being clairvoyants, and thus seeing his spiritual body.

Since the appearance of Jesus after the crucifixion seems necessary to account for the known facts of Christianity, and since it does not appear to have been a spiritual one, we naturally regard it as physical, the appearance of the man in proper person, the crucifixion having failed to extinguish life.

If we should hear of a man who was hung for murder being afterward seen by his friends, if we had any confidence in their statements we should naturally suppose that the hanging did not really kill him. Ambrose Gwynett was hung and afterwards gibbeted for a supposed murder, yet was taken down by friends, who discovered that he was alive, and had the pleasure subsequently of seeing the man for whose supposed murder he was hung, he having been carried off by a press-gang.

From the accounts given by Matthew and Luke, we learn that Jesus was on the cross from the sixth

hour to the ninth hour, or from noon to three o'clock in the afternoon; and, had we these narrations alone, we might suppose that his death occurred after he had hung upon the cross for three hours, the time during which we are told "there was darkness over all the land." But Mark informs us that he was crucified at the third hour, or at nine o'clock in the morning; and "gave up the ghost" about the ninth hour, or three in the afternoon, the time of his death according to Matthew and Luke: so that, if Mark is correct, he must have hung on the cross about six hours.

It is difficult, however, to conceive how he could have been crucified as early as nine o'clock, when we consider, according to the statements of the evangelists, what was done that morning. As soon as it was day (Luke xxii. 66),—and that could not have been earlier than half-past five, as it was about the middle of April,—"the elders of the people and the chief priests and scribes came together, and led him unto their council," before which he was examined. If this examination before the council occupied but half an hour (and we cannot suppose it to have taken less), when finished it was six o'clock. Jesus was then bound, carried away, and delivered to Pilate (Mark xv. 1): this could hardly have taken up less than half an hour more, and this brings us to half-past six. Pilate examined Jesus, and heard the accusations of the chief priests and elders (Matt. xxvii. 12). He tried to persuade the multitude of the innocence of Jesus, and probably more strenuously after his wife said that she had "suffered many

things . . . in a dream because of him." Learning that he was a Galilean, a fact previously unknown to him, he sent him to Herod, who was in Jerusalem at the time; for Galilee was under the jurisdiction of Herod. If we suppose the examination before Pilate, and delivery to Herod, to have occupied an hour more (and surely that is not an extravagant estimate), at the time Jesus stood before Herod it was half-past seven o'clock. Herod questioned Jesus "in many words" (Luke xxiii. 9); the chief priests and scribes accused him; and Herod with his men of war mocked him, arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him back to Pilate. This must have consumed another hour; and, when he appeared the second time before Pilate, it must have been at least half-past eight. Pilate called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people (Luke xxiii. 13), to confer with them about the disposition to be made of Jesus; then he was scourged, and delivered to the soldiers, who led him "into the hall called Prætorium," stripped him, put on him a scarlet robe and a crown of thorns, and bowed before him in mock homage; then they took off the garments of pretended royalty, and put on him his own clothes. This conference, the scourging, stripping, dressing, and mockery, cannot have taken less time than an hour and a half; but this brings us to ten o'clock. Then Jesus was led to Golgotha, which was outside of the city; he carrying his cross according to John, or Simon a Cyrenian according to the other evangelists; the probability being that he bore it a portion of the way. This walk to Golgotha, and all the

preparations for the crucifixion, could not well have occupied less than an hour; and it must apparently have been at least eleven o'clock when Jesus was crucified. It would be easy to lengthen the time, but it is not easy to see how it could be shortened; and if Jesus was crucified at eleven o'clock, and died at three in the afternoon, he hung on the cross only four hours.

And this is as long a period as John's narrative will allow. About the sixth hour, he informs us (John xix. 14) that Jesus was being examined before Pilate, — that is, at noon; though, according to Mark, he had already been hanging on the cross for three hours. After sentence had been pronounced, he was led to Golgotha, bearing his cross; and yet his body was given up to Joseph of Arimathæa before six o'clock in the evening, as at that time the sabbath began.

The longest period that these narratives allow for the suspension of Jesus upon the cross is six hours; and, if any confidence is to be placed in the statements of three of the Gospels, it was probably much less than that. Was this sufficient to produce death?

Josephus tells us,[1] that being sent by Titus, evidently from the camp at Jerusalem, to the village of Tekoah, twelve miles away, on his return he saw several Jewish captives crucified, three of whom he recognized as former acquaintances. He went to Titus, and by his entreaties had them taken down and cared for. Two of them died under the physician's hands, but the third recovered. How long

[1] Preface to the Antiquities of the Jews.

they had been suspended he does not state, but certainly longer than the time it took him to go to Jerusalem, procure their release from Titus, and return to them again; and we cannot imagine it to be less than the time that Jesus hung upon the cross.

A young Turk who was crucified at Damascus in 1247, and whose hands, arms, and feet were nailed, lived from the noon of Friday to the noon of Sunday.

We have several accounts of the crucifixion of certain fanatical women in France, called convulsionaires. One of them, *nailed through the hands and feet*, remained on the cross for three hours, and, after being taken down, speedily recovered. Dr. Merand was present. The nails with which she was fastened were five inches long. One of these women was crucified twenty-three times.[1] De la Condamine witnessed the crucifixion of two of these women. "One of them, who had been crucified thrice before, remained on the cross for three hours. They suffered most pain from the operation of extracting the nails; and it was not until then that they lost more than a few drops of blood from their wounds. After they were taken down they seemed to suffer little, and speedily recovered." Kitto says,[2] "We may consider thirty-six hours to be the earliest period at which crucifixion would occasion death in a healthy adult." In Smith's Dictionary of the Bible we are likewise informed that death from crucifixion "sometimes did not supervene even for three days, and was at last the result of gradual benumbing and starvation."

[1] Penny Cyclopædia, article Cross.
[2] Biblical Cyclopædia, article Crucifixion.

Mr. James Jones thus describes a crucifixion that he witnessed at Amoy, China, in October, 1863: —

"The victim was a well-known thief, whose principal offence was that of stealing young girls, and selling them for prostitutes.

"The cross was of the Latin form, the foot being inserted in a stout plank; and the criminal, standing on the board, had nails driven through his feet, his hands stretched and nailed to the cross-beam. His legs were fastened to the cross with an iron chain, and his arms bound with cords; and on the cord around his waist was inserted a piece of wood, on which was written his name and offence. A similar piece on his right arm contained his sentence, — viz., to remain on the cross day and night until he died: another on his left arm had the name of the judge, with his titles and offices. The criminal was nailed to the cross inside the *yanum* in the presence of the magistrate, and then carried by four coolies to one of the principal thoroughfares leading from the city, where he was left during the day, but removed at night inside the prison, for fear of his friends attempting to rescue him; and again carried forth at daylight in charge of two soldiers." He was crucified at noon on Wednesday, and Mr. Jones conversed with him at five in the evening. "He complained of pain in the chest, and thirst. On Thursday he slept for some hours, when the cross was laid down within the jail-compound. No one was allowed to supply him with food or drink; and during the day there was quite a fair in front of the cross, people being attracted from a distance, and the sweetmeat-vend-

ers driving a large trade. On Saturday he was still alive, when the *Taotal* was appealed to by a foreigner to put an end to the wretch's sufferings; and he immediately gave orders that vinegar should be administered, which he expected would produce immediate death. But the result was otherwise; and at sunset, when the cross was taken within the jail, two soldiers with stout bamboos broke both his legs, and then strangled him." This man was on the cross for more than three days, then; though part of the time he was not suspended, and had to be strangled at last. Suppose he had been taken down after he had hung six hours: his recovery would doubtless have been speedy.

A young, temperate man like Jesus, living in the open air, and constantly walking about, we may reasonably suppose to have been in good health: why, then, should he die in a few hours, when he might have been expected to survive for at least one or two days? Is it not probable that he merely passed into a state resembling death, a swoon or death-trance, from which he subsequently recovered? If Jesus was, as I suppose, a sensitive and medium, and subject to trance, as I know many of them to be, he might very readily pass into that condition upon the cross, — a condition which at times very closely resembles death.

When Joseph came to beg the body of Pilate, he "marvelled if he were already dead" (Mark xv. 44), and inquired of the centurion whether he had been long in that condition. When the centurion certified that he was dead (and this was probably from

the appearance that he presented as he hung on the cross), Pilate commanded the body to be delivered to him. Pity for a man who could not in their eyes be considered a great criminal may have made both Pilate and the centurion more careless about assuring themselves of his actual death than they would otherwise have been.

The death of the two thieves was hastened by breaking their legs; but Jesus being, as they supposed, dead already, they did not break his legs.

It may be said that the spear-wound that he received must have rendered his death certain; for John's Gospel declares that one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and that blood and water came out. The other evangelists know nothing of this spear-wound in the side; nor does Jesus in them refer to this wound after his resurrection, as he does in the fourth Gospel. As Strauss says,[1] "If the side of Jesus had been pierced while he was alive, and the blood fluid, then blood alone would have flowed out; but if he had been dead, and the blood coagulated, nothing could have flowed out. If the spear had pierced the pericardium while the blood was flowing, its fluid would have mixed with the blood, and been undistinguishable from it; but, if the blood had coagulated, then the fluid that surrounds the heart would have flowed out alone." It is therefore impossible that blood and water should have flowed from the spear-wound, or even what appeared like it, so as to be distinguishable to spectators.

But why should the writer make such a statement

[1] Strauss's Life of Jesus.

if it was not true? For the same reason that the first Gospel represents Jesus as riding into Jerusalem on an ass *and* its colt (Matt. xxi. 7); telling us that all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." Misunderstanding the Hebrew poet, who only meant one animal, — as if he had said, "sitting upon an ass, even a colt the foal of an ass," — the writer makes Jesus perform the feat of riding upon two animals in order to fulfil the prophecy. Such the Messiah, in his opinion, was to do, and such he therefore did. The author of the fourth Gospel, finding that another passage in Zechariah, supposed to refer to the Messiah, represents him as being pierced, has a soldier pierce Jesus with his spear, and then tells us that it was done "that the scripture should be fulfilled." Some hesitation might be felt about making such a charge against the author of this Gospel, had he not been evidently guilty of it on other occasions. On one of those occasions he makes, indeed, a similar mistake to that in Matthew. To fulfil a supposed prophecy of the Messiah found in the twenty-second Psalm, "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture," — garments and vesture evidently referring to the same article of clothing, — he represents them parting his garment, and casting lots for his coat, contrary to the statements of the other evangelists; for he supposed garments and vesture to be distinct, and makes his description to agree with his mistaken notion.

The spear-wound was given to Jesus, according to the fourth Gospel, in consequence of Pilate's order, made at the request of the Jews, that the legs of the crucified men should be broken, and they taken away before the sabbath. But, according to Matthew (xxvii. 58), Joseph begged the body, and "*then* Pilate commanded the body to be delivered;" and, according to Mark and Luke, Joseph took the body down from the cross. But if Pilate had previously commanded the soldiers to break the legs of the crucified, and take them away, as we are informed in John, Joseph could not have taken the body of Jesus down from the cross; for the soldiers, obeying the order of Pilate, must have taken it down themselves. According to Mark, when Joseph went in the evening to beg the body of Jesus, "Pilate marvelled if he were already dead;" but how could he marvel if he had ordered the soldiers to break his legs in order to kill him? And, in John, Joseph is represented as going to Pilate to beg the body (John xix. 38) after the legs of the thieves were broken, and the side of Jesus pierced. It is evident, therefore, if the other evangelists give a true statement in reference to these particulars, that Pilate, before Joseph applied for the body of Jesus, had not given any order to the soldiers to break the legs of the crucified, and take them away; and consequently the spear-wound, which is represented as having been made in consequence of that order, never was made. In the time when the fourth Gospel was written, evidently after the others, there may have been doubt suggested as to the actual death of Jesus; and the story of the

spear-wound, of which he is the only narrator, may have been intended to set this at rest, as well as to fulfil the prophecy. When the writers of the Gospel accounts were fully persuaded that Jesus was the Messiah, they were equally persuaded that all the Messianic prophecies were fulfilled in him; and, in the absence of any actual knowledge, they appear at times to have written what they regarded as prophecies as veritable history. It is of course impossible to say who did this. Every Gospel may include, and I believe does include, statements made by a number of persons unknown to the compilers of the Gospels, who had to judge of their accuracy as we have.

The probability is, then, that Jesus did not die upon the cross; that he passed into a state of death-trance, from which he subsequently recovered.

THE MORAL LESSONS OF JESUS.

It is said that "the moral lessons which Jesus taught were the highest the world has ever heard, the most godlike that mankind has ever known." But acknowledged enthusiasts and fanatics give excellent moral lessons. Mohammed says, "Dō good; for God loveth those who do good."[1] "They will ask thee what they shall bestow in alms: answer, The good which ye bestow, let it be given to parents and kindred and orphans, and the poor and the stranger."[2] "Whoso committeth wickedness, committeth it against his own soul."[3] "Give unto him who is of kin to thee his reasonable due, and also to the poor

[1] Alkoran, chap. ii. p. 23. [2] Ibid., chap. ii. p. 25.
[3] Ibid., chap. iv. p. 74.

and the stranger."[1] "He who doth right doth it to the advantage of his own soul, and he who doth evil doth it against the same."[2]

"Woe to every slanderer and backbiter who heapeth up riches, and prepareth the same for the time to come!"[3] "Woe to the hypocrites! they pray negligently, and only from ostentation: they refuse to stretch out a succoring hand to their fellow-creatures."[4] "Whoso worketh righteousness, whether he be male or female, and is a true believer, we will surely raise him to a happy life; and we will give them their reward, according to the utmost merit of their actions."[5]

"Draw not near unto fornication; for it is wickedness and an evil way." "Give full measure when you measure aught, and weigh with a just balance." "Walk not proudly in the land; for thou canst not cleave the earth, neither shalt thou equal the mountains in stature."[6]

When the moral lessons of Jesus are referred to, those given in the Sermon on the Mount are generally meant. Many of them are excellent, and the spirit that pervades the whole is far in advance of his age. But how much depends upon the meanings that persons attach to the words! If we treat the Sermon on the Mount as we would treat the words of some unknown writer, we find much that will not bear criticism.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." What is it to be poor in

[1] Alkoran, chap. x. [2] Chap. xli. [3] Chap. civ.
[4] Chap. cvii. [5] Chap. xvi. [6] Chap. xvii.

money? It is to have but little money. To be poor in land is to possess but little land. What can it mean to be poor in spirit? To have little spirit, we should naturally suppose. And are those blessed who have little spirit? Is the kingdom of heaven the inheritance of the mean-spirited? "Save me from such a kingdom, then!" says every true soul.

But we are told that the passage does not mean any such thing. How unfortunate it is, then, that Jesus did not say what he meant, or that his reporters did not write what he said! I am inclined to think that Luke, who reports the same discourse, comes nearer to the original statement. Before Jesus stands the motley crowd, — his poor friends; swarthy fishermen from the Galilean lake; idlers from the neighboring villages; some of his relatives from Nazareth, who have heard of his strange conduct and words; beggars, who ply their vocation among the crowd; and the sick, — poor wretches, unable to employ a physician, who have heard of the cures performed by the prophet of Nazareth. Jesus exclaims, "Blessed are ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God." The writer of the passage in Matthew spiritualizes it, as so many commentators do such passages to this day, and writes, "Blessed are the poor *in spirit*." In this form the passage has no meaning: in the other form it is easy to see what Jesus meant. The kingdom of God is the poor's; because the poor are the ones who accept Jesus as the Messiah, and he will admit them into the kingdom of his Father. If the passage in Matthew had read, "Blessed are the rich in spirit," or the liberal-minded, it would have been a much more excellent beatitude.

The next passage is, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." But what is there beautiful in this? Those who mourn not need no comforting. To mourn in order to have the blessing of comfort would be like suffering pain for the sake of the relief when the pain was gone. We should not think this saying a very wise one, "Blessed are they that suffer; for they shall be relieved:" and yet the one is as sensible as the other. But Jesus probably meant this for the believers in him who were mourning, and whom he intended to comfort when he came in the clouds of heaven.

The next beatitude is, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." Meekness is at times a great virtue; though it may degenerate into a vice, and encourage tyranny that should be overthrown. But where is the connection between the virtue and the reward here promised? Warlike peoples — such, for instance, as the ancient Romans and the modern English — have been the greatest landholders on the planet, while the meek toilers of all countries are generally destitute of a foot of ground that they can call their own.

Then follows, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." The meaning appears to be, "Blessed are those who long to do right; for they shall be filled." But they must do more than hunger and thirst for it, they must live the life of righteousness, if they would be truly blessed. "They shall be filled." Filled with what? Persons may be filled with the desire to be righteous; but this they must be when

they hunger and thirst after it: they cannot be filled with righteousness, since that is the condition of doing right. As the passage reads, it is not good sense; and I think Luke again gives the original statement of Jesus, who looked upon the poor, hungry crowd before him, and, sympathizing with them, said for their consolation, "Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled," — referring again, probably, to the time of which he speaks at the last supper, when he and his friends will feast in the kingdom of God. The writer in Matthew, not appreciating this bread-and-butter beatitude, adds, "after righteousness," and gives us, in consequence, a statement destitute of meaning, as he had done previously.

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." That is good and beautiful.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." Purity of heart is essential to purity of life, and is always to be esteemed; but what is the meaning of "they shall see God"? Jesus probably meant that those who were pure in heart should see God after death in a personal form, while those who were otherwise should be excluded from his presence. Is this correct? If God is an infinite and eternal spirit, how can he be seen? What eye can ever take in the Infinite? None but the eye of a God. If God is the totality of the universe, — and this appears to be the only rational and consistent definition of God, — then it is certain that we shall see God in the hereafter only as we see him here, by the great universe that reveals him; and this is a sight vouchsafed

to all, in proportion to their intelligence and spiritual development.

"Blessed are the peacemakers" is good; but when Jesus adds, "for they shall be called the children of God," the passage is spoiled. The peacemakers are blessed even if they are called the children of the Devil, as they frequently are.

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." The last clause of the sentence spoils the passage again. Blessed is the man who is evil spoken of because he speaks the truth, and does the right; that is well: but why is a man blessed who is reviled for the sake of the Nazarene? If he had said "for the truth's sake," it would have been much better. The self-esteem of Jesus crops out everywhere, and his obtrusive personality appears in and mars his choicest utterances. He is thinking again of his Messiahship, and the rewards that he will bestow on his friends who had suffered for him. The Koran abounds with passages spoiled by Mohammed in a similar manner. In this respect, these religious enthusiasts are far below many of the philosophers of Greece, Rome, China, and India, men who loved truth for its own sake, and recommended righteousness because it is conducive to human welfare.

"Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." We may say that this came from the life experience of Jesus, and that many enjoy the blessedness of which he speaks who do not accept of the Nazarene as their

Master; but the kingdom of heaven is so generally connected in the mind of Jesus with the Messianic idea, that the probability is that it meant that he would give to those who were persecuted for his sake a seat in his heavenly kingdom.

"If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." The spirit of this is excellent, — duties to man before sacrifices to God. Better still would have been, "be reconciled to thy brother, then thou need not offer thy gift." The only sacrifice acceptable to God is that which is beneficial to man.

"Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire." This is the superstitious trifling of a man who regards the outward expression rather than the inward motive. No man is angry with any one "without a cause;" but, as this clause is wanting in some of the oldest manuscripts, it was probably inserted by some one who thought it was right to be angry if there was a sufficient cause. The man who allows anger to become his master is always in danger of doing what his judgment will condemn; and it matters little whether he calls a man "vile fellow," or "fool."

"Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced com-

mitteth adultery." This passage acknowledges the right of a man to put away his wife for a certain cause, but does not recognize the right of a woman to put away her husband for the same cause. There are many causes besides fornication that render marriage a bond of unutterable slavery to one or both parties, and productive of evil; but if parties separate in consequence, and marry again, they are, according to this, guilty of adultery. Men's better judgment, even the judgment of Christians, has saved them from accepting this declaration of Jesus.

"Swear not at all." He tells us not to swear "by heaven, for it is God's throne." Suppose it had not been God's throne, would it have been right to swear? We are not to swear "by the earth, for it is his footstool." What connection is there between the command and the reason given for it? We are not to swear "by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King." Suppose it had been the city of the small king, or a city without a king. We are not to swear by our heads, because we cannot "make one hair white or black." But in these days we can make all the hairs black at least: is it therefore right for us to swear? After saying, "Swear not at all," he should have given some proper reason for the command, and not descended to such trifling as greatly weakens the force of the original command. Suppose some one should write, "Steal not at all," and then add, "Thou shalt not steal apples, for thou canst not make one apple sour or sweet; thou shalt not steal gold, for thou canst not make it one grain heavier or lighter:" who does not see that the force of the original com-

mand would be weakened? for the reason given has no connection with the command. Are such arguments any the less childish because they are found in the New Testament, and attributed to Jesus?

"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you." A man may bless those that curse him, and he may do good to those that hate him; but to love a man that he knows to be his enemy is not in his power to will. The feeling that animated the man who spoke the words is commendable: it sprang from benevolence, but it was benevolence unregulated by enlightened judgment. Love and hate are not subject to the will. If a man by his conduct gratifies us, we cannot will ourselves to hate him; and, if another by his conduct offends us, we cannot will to love him, though we may do him good. But the fault of the passage, if fault it has, is one that "leans to virtue's side." We may believe in that "hearty hatred of scoundrels" which Carlyle recommends; yet the highest philosophy and the soundest wisdom teach that men are what all the past has made them. Revenge is therefore entirely out of place, and blame equally so; and he is the wisest man who kills his enemy by converting him into a friend.

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them." That is good: ostentatious alms-giving is contemptible, for it is unmanly. But, when Jesus adds that God will reward those openly who give alms secretly, he is presenting a motive which facts do not authorize; and, when men find that they are not rewarded openly for their secret

benevolence, they may return to their former avaricious practices.

The conclusion of this famous sermon shows that egotism again which Jesus manifested throughout his career. "Whosoever heareth *these sayings of mine*, and doeth them," is like a wise man who built his house on the rock: he who hears his sayings, and does them not, is like a foolish man who builds on the sand. It is certain that no living man obeys the commands of Jesus as given in that sermon; and, if any one should even try, it would be the best of evidence that he was indeed a foolish man.

We may be told that these are mere spots on the sun. Granted; but, as the spots on the sun show that it is subject to the same law as all other cooling bodies, so these spots in the character and teachings of Jesus show us that he was subject to the same laws that govern all mortals, and that we do right to regard him accordingly. As long as Jesus is regarded as a miraculous being, we can no more understand him than the old cosmogonists, to whom every mountain was a standing miracle, could understand the history of the earth.

There is sound philosophy in some of the teachings of Jesus; beautiful sayings, true to nature, and true to manly nature; exquisite parables, as those of the prodigal son, the good Samaritan, and the lost sheep; and the spirit of the man shining through the gospel histories is one that the unprejudiced cannot but be deeply interested in, if no higher, deeper feeling is called out. All, however, that Jesus was, his organization and his surroundings naturally made

him; and his lessons very naturally grew out of his life. As, for the organic forms that exist in any geologic formation, there are causes in the formation previous; as the horses of the miocene were preceded by the hipparion of the eocene, and the mastodon by the dinotherium; as the mammals of the eocene were preceded by the small marsupials of the lias and trias: so, in all history, behind events lie the causes that preceded and produced them. Back of the fruit lies the blossom, and back of that the bud, and back of that the leaves; and back of all these the plants, the soil, the rains, the suns, of unnumbered æons. No race of savages ever produced a Newton, a Humboldt, a Shakspeare, or a Goethe: they are the fruit of a tree of intellectual culture that took millenniums for its growth. So back of the lessons of Jesus lay the causes that produced them. Fortunately for us, Josephus, and Philo-Judæus the Alexandrian philosopher, give us the key to many of the sayings as well as many of the deeds of Jesus.

There were three principal religious sects among the Jews,—the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes in whom Judaism culminated. Of the Pharisees and Sadducees we have frequent mention in the Gospels, but of the Essenes not a word. Had they been described, the similarity between their tenets and those of Jesus would have led to an inquiry which would have proved fatal to some of the Christian claims.

Josephus informs us that many of them dwelt in every city; but they had a colony, according to Philo,

on the north-western shore of the Dead Sea, and lived in scattered communities in various parts of Palestine. The Shakers of our own day must strongly resemble them. Some of their doctrines as given by Josephus and Philo bear a striking resemblance to those of Jesus. Jesus says, "Swear not at all. Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Of the Essenes Josephus says, "Swearing is avoided by them, and they esteem it worse than perjury; for they say that he who cannot be believed without swearing by God is already condemned."

Jesus appears never to have married, and his doctrine is opposed to it rather than otherwise. His statement, that "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart," savors strongly of Essenism. Again he says, "There be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it" (Matt. xix. 12). He does not absolutely deny the propriety of marriage, but by example and precept indicates the superiority of celibacy. This appears to have been the very position of the Essenes. Josephus says, "They esteem continence, and the conquest over our passions, to be virtue. They neglect wedlock. . . . They do not absolutely deny the fitness of marriage, and the succession of mankind thereby continued; but they guard against the lascivious behavior of women."

The teachings of Jesus respecting property are also identical with those of the Essenes. Jesus says,

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth;" "Ye cannot serve God and mammon;" "Woe unto you that are rich!" "Sell that ye have, and give alms." His parable of the rich man and Lazarus shows what he supposed their fate would be. Josephus says of the Essenes, "A rich man enjoys no more of his own wealth than he who has nothing at all." "These men are despisers of riches, and so communicative as raises our admiration. Nor is there any one to be found among them who hath more than another; for it is a law among them, that those who come to them must let what they have be common to the whole order." Another witness says, "They had no individual property; . . . and their communistic motto, which the *Mishna* (*aboth*) has preserved to us, 'Mine is thine, and thine is mine,' explains itself."

Jesus sending out his disciples says, "Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat. And, into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence" (Matt. x. 9–11).

The practice that Jesus recommended was that in common use among the Essenes. Josephus says, "If any of their sect come from other places, what they have lies open before them just as if it were their own; and they go into such as they never knew before, as if they had been ever so long acquainted with them. For which reason, they carry nothing with them when they travel into remote parts; . . .

nor do they allow of the change of garments, or of shoes, till they be first entirely torn to pieces, or worn out by time."

"A wonderful book of cures, which Talmudic, Arabic, and Byzantine authorities alike ascribe to Solomon, was in the hands of the Essenes; and with this, by the aid of certain roots and stones, by the imposition of hands, and certain whisperings, . . . they cast out demons, and healed the sick." These are among the wonderful deeds that Jesus is said to have done, and which are styled miracles by the evangelists.

Jesus forbids his followers to resist evil, and blesses the peacemakers; and of the Essenes we find, "They are eminent for fidelity, and are the ministers of peace: . . . he will do no harm to any one, either of his own accord, or by command of others." [1]

From the great similarity between the doctrines of Jesus and those of the Essenes, it seems more than probable, that, previous to the advent of Jesus as a preacher and healer, he visited the Essene communities then existing in Palestine, conversed with the members, and became imbued with many of the doctrines that he afterward enunciated in his discourses. He was too self-reliant ever to have been a member.

It must not be supposed, however, that Jesus accepted the doctrines of any party entire. He was too intelligent, self-reliant, and independent for that. The Essenes observed the sabbath more strictly than any other Jews. They would neither light a fire nor remove a vessel from its place on the sabbath day,

[1] Josephus, book ii. chap. 8.

and even restrained the necessities of the body. We see none of this superstitious bondage in Jesus, who measures the sabbath according to its benefits to man, and refuses to allow either himself or his disciples to be enslaved by it. The food of the Essenes was pulse with bread and water. Jesus had no hesitation about eating and drinking what was set before him. In some respects, the Essenes were Pharisees of the Pharisees; and in such respects Jesus differed more widely from them than he did from the Pharisees.

CHAPTER III.

JESUS A CLAIRVOYANT.

But when we prove that Mohammed was an enthusiast, and even a fanatic, as we can readily do, we have by no means accounted for Mohammedanism and its persistent influence over thousands of millions, among them men of great virtue and culture. So when we have shown that Jesus was an enthusiast, and at times passed over the line to fanaticism, we have by no means accounted for Christianity; nor have we done more than reveal one side, and that by no means the most important, in the life of its extraordinary founder. Had Jesus been merely an enthusiast, he would have passed, as a million others have done, like a flashing meteor. A few Judean admirers would have gazed with wonder; but he would have left no abiding impression on mankind.

One secret of the superior success of Jesus is, I think, to be attributed to the possession of clairvoyant power. That he was clairvoyant, those who accept the Gospels cannot doubt, and those who reject the Gospels as authority may readily grant, especially if they are familiar with the clairvoyant phenomena of our own day.

In John we are informed, that, when Jesus saw Nathanael coming, he said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael is astonished, for it is evident that he had never seen the man before; and he says, "Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus replies, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." This so satisfies Nathanael, that he exclaims, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Such an exhibition of clairvoyance to-day would be far from producing such an effect. But with the peculiar ideas of the Jews, in an age when very little was known about this spiritual power, and a belief in the miraculous was almost universal, it was very likely to lead to a claim of Messiahship on the one side, and a readiness to grant the claim on the other. Indeed, I know of persons to-day, who, on the strength of the possession of somewhat similar powers, make similar claims.

We find another exhibition of clairvoyance in connection with the last visit of Jesus to Jerusalem. As he and the disciples came near the Mount of Olives, on their way to the city, Jesus said to two of them, "Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me." The disciples went, and found them as Jesus had declared.

When the Samaritan woman at the well said, "I have no husband," Jesus replies, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband." Her own statement regarding Je-

sus, made to her countrymen, was, "a man who told me all things that ever I did."

On another occasion, referred to by all the synoptists, Jairus, the ruler of a synagogue, came to ask Jesus to cure his daughter; but, while he was talking, a messenger came to inform him that his daughter was dead. Jesus, however, went to the house, where he found the mourners weeping and wailing over the supposed dead body: but he went in, and said, "The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth;" at which they laughed him to scorn. He proved to be right, however; for, on telling her to rise, the girl rose up at once, and walked.

On one occasion we are informed (Matt. ix. 2–4) that Jesus said to a man sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good cheer: thy sins be forgiven thee." Some of the scribes who heard him said *within themselves*, "This man blasphemeth;" when Jesus, "knowing their thoughts," replied to them as if they had been words. On another occasion, referred to in Matt. xii. 25, we are told that he knew the thoughts of the Pharisees. When the disciples reason among themselves (Matt. xvi. 7), Jesus perceives it, and replies to them. Such an exercise of power would seem to them miraculous, as it also doubtless did to him. This accounts for his knowledge of the betrayal upon which Judas had agreed, and the agony as he anticipated the result. In John ii. 24, 25, we read that Jesus "knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man." The possession of this faculty by Jesus was so well known, that, when he was before the high

priest, the men that held him blindfolded him, and then said, "Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?" (Luke xxii. 63, 64.) They evidently made a mockery of his power in this respect.

Supposing some of these accounts to be fabricated, which is not unlikely, still there must have been an exercise of such power on the part of Jesus that led to the fabrication of them. The possession of such a faculty would naturally lead Jesus to suppose that he was specially endowed by God, and strengthen the belief that he was the long-looked-for Messiah and the Redeemer of his race.

CHAPTER IV.

JESUS A NATURAL HEALER.

BESIDE this clairvoyant power, it appears evident that Jesus had great ability to heal diseases, such as we know to be possessed by various individuals now living. I see no difficulty in accepting the Gospel accounts of many of his marvellous deeds of this character; for deeds quite as remarkable as most, and more remarkable than some, attributed to him, are taking place constantly. The evangelists declare that Jesus cured all manner of diseases, just as we read that Valentine Greatrakes, an Irish gentleman of the seventeenth century, became famous "for the cure of all kinds of diseases merely by the touch:"[1] but, when the evangelists particularize the diseases that Jesus cured, we find them to be generally possession of devils, lunacy, and palsy; and such diseases are most readily cured by healers to-day. The Jews seem to have supposed that deranged persons who were violent, and epileptics, were possessed of devils; and, since such persons are frequently cured by powerful magnetizers with a word, it is not surprising that Jesus should have been able to accomplish this. Many diseases yield to the power

[1] Appleton's Cyclopædia of Biography.

of a strong will, and a firm, commanding voice; and the man who has strong faith in himself is he who, all other things being equal, will be most successful. Jesus, in this respect, was pre-eminently qualified.

The cures performed by Dr. J. R. Newton, and certified to by living persons, are a hundred times more numerous than those mentioned in the Gospels, and, had they been related there of Jesus, would have been regarded by most of his believers as strong evidences of his Messiahship.

In the first three Gospels is an account of the cure of a man who was sick of the palsy. The man was taken to Jesus on a bed, apparently unable to stand. How long he had been so, we are not informed. Jesus said unto him, "Son, be of good cheer: thy sins be forgiven thee." This does not appear to have produced any effect. He then says, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house;" when he arose, and went to his house.

Here is the statement of Miss Kate O'Conner to a cure nearly if not quite as remarkable: —

[From Miss Kate O'Conner.]

I am nineteen years of age; live in Yardleyville, Bucks County, Penn. I have been afflicted with spine-disease, and total paralysis of the lower limbs. I had no more use of my lower extremities than an infant; was unable to walk for five years and a half; was in the Philadelphia Hospital four years, and was carried about in a chair on wheels. Was treated by the most eminent physicians: they burned the entire length of my back with a hot iron, without benefit. I heard of Dr. J. R. Newton; and, on the 8th of November last, I was carried to his rooms in the arms of my brother, unable to bear the least weight on my feet. In ten minutes' treatment I was able to

walk across the room; and in twenty minutes I was able to walk down stairs, and out to the carriage, *alone*. I have been perfectly well ever since, enjoying better health than ever before. KATE O'CONNER.

Sworn and subscribed before me, this fifth day of March, 1863.

WILLIAM P. HIBBERD, *Alderman, Philadelphia.*

If this story had been related at third or fourth hand, it would probably have been more remarkable than the scriptural one.

As remarkable as the cure of the withered hand, related also by the first three evangelists, is the following, which is very much better authenticated: —

This is to certify that I, R. H. Havens, of Fair Haven, Conn., had my leg broke on the 1st of November, 1855. The knee was drawn up and calloused for six years. I tried all the eminent physicians I could find to see if my leg could be straightened and healed, but all to no effect: they pronounced me incurable. I used two crutches. I heard of Dr. J. R. Newton, and, as a last resort, had him treat me. He straightened my leg, and cured me; and I left my crutches with him, having no further use for them. I can walk ten miles any day, and jump with any other living man.

R. H. HAVENS, *Fair Haven, Conn.*

NEW-HAVEN COUNTY, CITY OF NEW HAVEN,
Jan. 6, 1863.

Personally appeared before me Mr. R. H. Havens, the signer of the foregoing, and made solemn oath that the same is true.

GEO. H. WATROUS, *Justice of the Peace.*

A young lady who had been lame for six years, and compelled to use crutches for five years, went to Dr. Newton's rooms, was cured in ten minutes, left

her crutches with him, walked two miles without limping, and certified three months afterward that she had been well ever since.

We have in the first three evangelists the cure by Jesus of a blind man on the road to Jerusalem, at Jericho: though, according to Matthew and Mark, it was done in going out of the city; and according to Luke, in going into it; while in Matthew there are two blind men, and in Mark and Luke only one. Other cures of the blind are related by the evangelists, culminating in John by the cure of a man blind from his birth; but this is given by the least reliable of the evangelists alone.

Dr. Newton has cured many who were blind; among them the daughter of Caroline Thomas, whose case is thus stated by her mother in a letter to the doctor: —

Richmond, Ind., Nov. 23, 1868.

Dear Friend Dr. Newton, — I write to make a statement in regard to the cure you made for my daughter in Bellefontaine, O., three years ago the 2d of the coming December. She had been entirely blind for one year, and we had tried many skilful physicians to no effect. When I heard of your wonderful cures, I went; and in three minutes' time, by your touch alone, my daughter was perfectly restored to sight, and remains so to this day. Caroline P. Thomas.

In this case the mother certifies that she had been entirely blind for one year, and yet was cured in three minutes. There could have been no fancy about this; for the mother declares that "she was *perfectly* restored to sight," and had remained so when the letter was written for three years.

The following report of one of Dr. Newton's levees is from the San Francisco "Daily Evening Post" of Feb. 14, 1873:[1] —

"Our reporter had a seat in a corner, and watched with interest the continued throng of patients who passed in and out. During the time he was there, a count showed their number to have been eighty, of both sexes, and of all ages and conditions of life, who were afflicted with pretty much all the ills that flesh is heir to. . . .

"While we were in the doctor's rooms, one gentleman came in on crutches, limping along with great difficulty. The doctor said he could cure him, and put him through a course of passes and rubbings; and in ten minutes the man had thrown away his crutches, and was dancing and gyrating in the most laughable manner. . . .

"Another remarkable case was of a woman who seemed to have a film over her eyes, and who said she was blind. The doctor talked to her a while, made some passes, pressed his thumbs upon her eyelids, and told her she could see. She winked slowly, like a bat brought into the sunshine; then declared she could see; and, taking up a newspaper, she commenced to read it, — the first reading, according to her own declaration, that she had done for six years. Her joy was affecting.

"A little child was brought in on a pillow. It seemed perfectly helpless, unable to move any portion of its body except its eyes; yet in half an hour it was sitting up, playing and laughing."

If we could have had a report of the cures of Jesus from one of the scribes of his time, we can hardly suppose that it would have been any more remarkable. Dr. Newton, however, does not regard his cures as miraculous, but as the result of causes as natural in their operation as the fall of a rain-drop.

[1] Quoted by Dr. Crowell in Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism.

That Jesus performed his cures in a similar manner to that in which modern healers perform theirs, is very clearly indicated by several statements in the Gospels. In Luke vi. 19 we are told that "the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went virtue out of him." The diseased in the land of Gennesaret "besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole" (Matt. xiv. 36). Influences for good or evil, health or disease, are passing from human beings continually, and, in fact, from substances generally, of which I have had abundant evidence in psychometric experiments. Some persons, indeed, resemble walking batteries, who have the power to transmit healing influences to those who touch them, even when this is unknown to themselves. "The Post" reporter of San Francisco says of Dr. Newton, "That he is a man of remarkable magnetic power, there can be no doubt: his touch is electrical, like that of a shock from a battery." It has long been known to mesmeric operators that this healing power which some persons possess may be communicated to garments, and even transmitted to a distance. Mr. H. J. Atkinson, quoted by Prof. Gregory in his "Letters on Animal Magnetism," says, "I have found that one's own peculiar mesmeric power may be in a measure conveyed to another." He tells of gloves which he charged with his influence, and sent to a lady at a distance, by which she was relieved of fearful pain resulting from tic-douloureux.

When the sick woman touched Jesus, he perceived that "virtue had gone out of him;" and this uncon-

scious statement of Jesus, and record of the evangelist, is one of the best evidences of its truth, and the naturalness of the power by which the cures of Jesus were effected. Contact with sick persons will sensibly effect sensitives who are unaware of their condition, as those acquainted with mesmerism and psychometry very well know.

Thomas Hartshorn says, "I have known a somnambulist, when in her natural state, to be afflicted with a violent side-ache, in consequence of sitting down and taking the hand of a patient then being magnetized for that complaint. . . . The same thing has been observed by the celebrated physician Georget. He says, that, "whenever he put his somnambulists in communication with a sick person, they immediately experienced a pain, an uneasiness, and sometimes a sharp affection, in the corresponding organs." [1]

We have two cases of cures performed by Jesus at a distance. A Canaanitish woman has a daughter "grievously vexed with a devil:" she begs of Jesus to cure her; which he does, saying to the woman, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt; and her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matt. xv. 28). The distance at which this was done we cannot tell; but the probability is that it was but short. The next is the cure of a son or servant of a centurion in Capernaum, said by Matthew to have had the palsy, and by Luke and John as ready to die. According to the synoptists, Jesus was near the house when the cure was performed; but, according to John, he was at Cana, about fifteen miles off. But suppose that

[1] Instructions in Animal Magnetism, by Deleuze.

we had a letter that we could know was written by the centurion, certifying to the cure. The following letter explains itself: —

RACCOON FORD, CULPEPER COUNTY, VA.

Dr. J. R. NEWTON.

Dear Sir, — My daughter's case is certainly one of the most remarkable I have ever known or heard of since the days of the apostles of old, — a chronic affliction of three years' standing. After explaining her case to Dr. Newton, I asked him if he could render her any service. He said, "*Yes, I can cure her*, and will not put *you* to the trouble and expense of bringing her here. I will do it now." He used me as a medium of communication; and in about two minutes he said to me, "Your daughter is well: take out your watch, and make a note of the time." I did so: it was twelve M. of Wednesday, 6th of March, 1861. On that day, while my daughter was at dinner, at home, in Orange County, Va. (over five hundred miles distant), at between twelve and one o'clock she remarked to her mother, "Ma, I feel so much better! I feel that I am well!" And well she certainly is, — as hale and hearty as I have ever known her.

Respectfully, WM. P. ELIASON.

Why should not the testimony of living first-hand witnesses be taken, if the testimony of we know not what hand witnesses is to be taken regarding events that transpired nearly two thousand years ago? If the testimony of living witnesses is to be received, many cures similar to the above have been effected within the last twenty-five years by persons who make no claim to be miraculous messengers from God. The powers with which Jesus was endowed were such as are possessed by living persons, and are no evidence of his Messianic character. The probability is that all healthy persons possess healing power,

which is readily imparted by touch. Some have this power to a much greater extent than others; but, in all, it may be developed by judicious exercise; while in some this sanative force is so great, that an individual can stand before fifty invalids, and in a few minutes send nearly all away rejoicing, apparently cured, as Zouave Jacob and Dr. Newton have frequently done.

CHAPTER V.

MIRACLES OF JESUS.

"But Jesus multiplied food," we are told, "feeding five thousand on a few loaves and fishes." That is a miracle indeed; but where is the evidence that can establish it? In the first two Gospels we have two accounts of miraculous feeding in each (Matt. xiv. 13–21, and xv. 29, 32–39; Mark vi. 30–44, viii. 1–10), and in Luke and John we have one each (Luke ix. 10–17, and John vi. 1–15). They all refer probably to the same occurrence, which, being found by the compilers of Matthew and Mark in various forms in the documents they consulted, were supposed by them to relate to distinct miracles. In all the cases, a multitude of people have gathered together in a desolate place. They are threatened by hunger. The disciples question whether food can be provided for them. Jesus inquires how much food they have: their only provision is a few loaves and fishes. Jesus commands the people to sit down; blesses the food, which is distributed by the disciples: several thousand persons are filled, and several baskets of fragments are taken up. In Matthew and Mark, after each miraculous feeding, the disciples cross by boat to the other side of the lake.

As related in the fourteenth of Matthew, five thousand men, besides women and children, are fed upon five loaves and two fishes. If there were five thousand men, we may reasonably conclude, that, with the women and children, they would number about seven thousand. They all ate, and were filled; and twelve baskets full of fragments were taken up. We may suppose, therefore, that there must have been food enough produced to give at least a pound to each person; which amounts to three tons and a half for the whole. Jesus took the loaves and fishes; blessed and brake them; gave them to the disciples, and they to the multitude. Did the miraculous increase take place in the hands of Jesus, the disciples, or the multitude? If in the hands of the multitude, the disciples must have distributed to each the merest crumb; for, if they were four-pound loaves, it would be but the one-twentieth of an ounce for each one. This is inconceivable. The increase must have taken place, then, either in the hands of Jesus, or those of the disciples. If we suppose the three tons and a half to consist of bread three tons, and fish half a ton, each loaf must have weighed twelve hundred pounds, and been equal to ten feet long, six feet thick, and five feet broad. Had the bread been thus magnified before their eyes before its distribution, we should have had some description of it; for this would have been much more striking than any thing else. Such loaves Jesus could hardly have broken, and given to his disciples. We may imagine, that, as Jesus broke off a piece, the original loaf grew complete, so that another piece could be broken off, and the loaf in no

wise diminish: but in that case the loaves could not be said to be broken, and handed to the disciples; and the record seems to teach that the original loaves and fishes were broken, and handed to them, and that the increase took place between their hands and the hands of the hungry multitude. We can hardly suppose, however, that Peter started with about two pounds of bread and half a pound of fish, and, before he reached the first party sitting upon the grass, that he found himself crushed down by a load of six hundred pounds of bread and a hundred and fifty pounds of fish. We should certainly have had some report of it, if this had been the nature of the miracle. When we attempt to realize it, the miracle breaks down under its own weight.

It is impossible that any one present could have known that the only food among a crowd of seven thousand persons was five loaves and two fishes. It is extremely improbable that such a number of persons would have followed Jesus into a desert place and remained till evening, and still more improbable that they should have done this without making any provision for their sustenance.

Jesus may in his benevolence have bought and distributed such food as he could conveniently obtain — a few loaves and fishes — to a crowd of perhaps three or four hundred persons; and others who had provisions with them, ashamed to be outdone, brought out their supplies, and handed them round, perhaps sent also to neighboring villages for food unknown to Jesus and his disciples, who, in their enthusiasm and belief in frequent miraculous interference, saw a

miracle in a very simple natural occurrence, which was successively magnified into its present dimensions.

But we are informed that Jesus raised the dead. In Luke we read that Jesus, approaching the city of Nain, saw a "dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." He had compassion on her, told her not to weep, came and touched the bier, and said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise! And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother."

It seems very strange that the other Gospels tell us nothing of this wonderful occurrence, while three of them narrate such a trifle as the cure of a fever. It could not be for want of knowledge; for we are informed that the rumor of this "went forth throughout all Judæa, and throughout all the region round about."

It is evident, if John's Gospel is to be credited, that the Jews in the neighborhood of Bethany had never heard of this wonderful occurrence; for, when Lazarus dies, they ask (xi. 37), "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind have even prevented this man's death?" If they had known of the resurrection of the widow's son, would they not have said, "Could not he who raised the widow's son save his friend's life?" If the speech is put into the mouth of the Jews by the writer, then he had never heard of this wonderful occurrence, or, if he had, did not believe it.

On the very day on which Jesus is represented as having raised this dead man in Nain, Matthew repre-

sents Jesus (Matt. viii.) as being on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee, in the country of the Gergesenes, more than thirty miles from Nain, having passed over from Capernaum in a ship; nor did he return to the western side of the sea, on which Nain was situated, till the day after. Which of these narrators shall we believe? If Matthew tells the truth, Luke is either trying to impose upon us, or has been himself imposed upon; and there can be no question about the comparative probability of the two. If I should read in George Fox's Journal that he raised a corpse to life in Cumberland on a certain day, and I found that William Penn gave an account of being with George Fox at a meeting in London on the same day, I should give no credence to the story of his raising the dead, nor would any other intelligent, unprejudiced person; and why should we believe in the raising of the widow's son's corpse? Jesus is represented as saying, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" But his corpse was no more a young man than a marble statue made to represent him. When the spirit has departed, the body is no more the man than his clothes. A man might as well say to the statue of Webster in Boston, "Webster, I say unto thee, Come down!" and the speech would be just as proper as the speech of Jesus; and if the statue of Webster should come down, and walk, it would be no more of a miracle than the Nain miracle recorded by Luke. It is also stated that Jesus "delivered him to his mother." Had this been a real occurrence, should we have read in a description of it any such unnatural sentence as that? It reveals the apocry-

phal character of the story. Jesus approaches, and touches the bier, or bed as it is in the original. It was set down, doubtless, when the bearers stood still. The Master of life speaks; and the hue of health flushes the pale countenance, the eyes open, the lips move; he speaks! Would there be any chance for Jesus to "deliver him to his mother"? That mother had been watching the stranger, heard the commanding voice that sent the blood with energy through her veins, saw the first sign of life, and with a scream of joy clasped her only son to her bosom, before Jesus could touch him. The man who manufactured the story had a poor idea of a mother's love, or he would never have related it in this unnatural manner.

The reality of spiritual phenomena to-day has led to the belief of many wonderful things that never took place, though frequently stated on very good authority; and the reality of many wonderful deeds performed by Jesus led, doubtless, in that less critical age, to the manufacture and acceptance of still more marvellous deeds that he never did perform. To this class, probably, belong the turning of water into wine, as related in the fourth Gospel, and the money found in the mouth of the fish. The death of the cursed fig-tree is probably an exaggeration of a natural occurrence. That a calm followed after he rebuked the winds and the sea is probable enough; but it would be difficult to show that the calm was produced by the rebuke.

The resurrection of Lazarus, after lying in the tomb for four days, is a still more remarkable miracle. If it could be proved that Lazarus was really

dead, and that Jesus raised him to life, we should then be compelled to confess that Jesus did possess a power greater than that of any mortal now living, and that our estimate of him is much lower than the facts warrant. The first thing that strikes us in an investigation of this, the most remarkable miracle that Jesus is said to have performed, is that no other evangelist refers to it. Luke tells Theophilus, in the preface to his Gospel, that he had perfect understanding of all things from the very first (Luke i. 1–4), and that he writes to him that he might know the certainty of those things in which he had been instructed. Could it be possible that the man who wrote this Gospel, and who says he had accurately traced — for this is what his language signifies — all things from the first, had not heard that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead? He records the cure of Peter's wife's mother, though she was only sick of a fever; he is quite familiar with the case of the man sick of the palsy; and has heard all about the centurion's servant, who was sick, and "ready to die." It is not possible that Jesus could have raised Lazarus after he had been dead four days, and Luke, who had read the writings of many who had set forth in order a declaration of those things which were most surely believed among Christians (Luke i. 1), could have remained ignorant of this his crowning work, which above all others bore evidence to the divinity of his mission. If he had not heard of it, it must have been because it did not take place; but if he heard of it, and did not give an account of it, it must have been because he did not believe it: it was not one of those things

in which Theophilus had been instructed. What is still more remarkable, Luke refers to a visit which Jesus paid to Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus, and designates the place as "a certain village," and Martha as "a certain woman." Would he not have known the name Bethany if any such event had occurred there, and said, the sister of Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead, if he had believed any such thing? It is not Luke alone, however, who is silent regarding this astounding miracle; but we find no mention of it in Matthew and Mark, though Bethany is referred to, and an anointing that took place there, though the name of Mary the sister of Lazarus, who was the woman, according to John, that did the anointing, is unknown to both writers, as is the name and story of their resurrected brother Lazarus. According to John xi. 53, it was from the time of this miracle that the Jews plotted the death of Jesus. This miracle would have been better known and more talked about than any other, had it been performed. A story similar to this of Lazarus promulgated to-day, and resting upon no better evidence, would not be considered worthy of serious refutation. Jesus was doubtless a natural healer, as many persons now are, and probably cured hundreds of persons of whom the Gospels give us no information: and this must have also strengthened his belief in his Messiahship, and convinced multitudes of the justice of his claim; for was not the Messiah to open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, make the lame to leap, and the tongue of the dumb to sing? When the Baptist sends to inquire

of Jesus whether he is the one that should come, or in other words the Messiah, the answer of Jesus is, — and it shows his estimate of his healing power, — "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up," &c. As much as to say, "You may know that I am the Messiah, when you see that I am able to perform these things, which it was prophesied the Messiah should do." It is not surprising that the people, finding Jesus do what seemed almost as miraculous as raising the dead, should have regarded him as their long-looked-for Messiah, and credited him with doing that also. Some of the Mormon elders practised healing by the laying-on of hands, and were in many cases very successful; and I have heard Mormons declare that they had known the dead to be raised by their instrumentality.

CHAPTER VI.

JESUS A SPIRITUAL MEDIUM.

It is not uncommon to find persons to-day who are clairvoyants, possess healing power, and are mediums through whom the departed can manifest.

There are many indications in the Gospels that Jesus was a person through whom spirits could operate, so as to reveal their presence to him, and at times to those who were in company with him. When he was baptized by John in Jordan, we are informed that the heavens were opened unto him, and a voice was heard, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It is not improbable that the clairvoyant vision of Jesus enabled him to see through the veil that ordinarily conceals the spirit-land from mortals, whilst by him as a medium his actual father could utter the words that were heard, supposed by Jesus to be the words of God.

That spirits can so far materialize themselves under favorable circumstances as to make vocal sounds is a fact well known to many. Dr. Crowell relates the following experience which he had at two *séances* with Dr. Slade. "No one but the medium and myself was present. The gas was turned down, and we sat at opposite sides of the table with our

hands upon it in contact. At each sitting, a spirit voice was soon heard addressing me, proceeding apparently from the air, first on one side of me, then on the other, then again from behind, and sometimes as if the spirit speaking was moving in circles around me. At one of these *séances* three different voices were heard, and at the other four, each giving the name of a spirit friend; and the conversation between us was in all respects as natural as ordinary conversation, excepting that the voices were coarse and husky like loud whispers, or as if directed through a materialized trumpet. One spirit especially, who purported to be my father, conversed in strong natural tones; and our conversation must have continued for some fifteen or twenty minutes. The topics were entirely of a personal nature, and reference was repeatedly made to matters and facts of which the medium could have had no knowledge: besides, not one of these sounds came from his locality; but in his natural voice he would often comment upon the remarks of the spirits, generally speaking at the same moments they did, so that I was repeatedly compelled to request him to refrain from conversation while they were speaking, as it prevented me from understanding them."[1] From my own experiments with Slade, I have no doubt of the accuracy of Dr. Crowell's statements. Since spirits thus communicate with living persons by voice, they do it by virtue of natural law, and, by the same law, may have communicated in the time of Jesus.

After the baptism, Jesus was "*led up of the spirit*

[1] Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism.

into the wilderness" (Matt. iv. 1). Mediums are at times thrown into an unconscious state, as mesmeric subjects frequently are by operators; and while in that state they have been led to localities, obedient not to their own will, but the will of the controlling intelligence. Jesus may have been "led" in a similar manner, some of his friends recognizing by his language his peculiar condition.

At the conclusion of his temptation, we are told that "angels ministered unto him." They minister to millions now, but few of whom are able to recognize their presence. With the interest that unnumbered hosts of departed Jewish spirits must have had in the welfare of their down-trodden nation, it is not at all surprising that they should have ministered to one who might be its deliverer; nor, with the spiritual development which Jesus seems to have possessed, is it remarkable that he should have been able to sense their presence, though he may have been far from appreciating what he saw and heard, as is the case with many mediums to-day.

One evening the disciples started from the eastern shore of the Lake of Gennesaret to sail across to Bethsaida, Jesus in the mean time having gone on to a mountain. The wind was contrary, and they made but slow progress in rowing; so that, between three and six in the morning, they were not four miles from shore. Suddenly Jesus approached the vessel, walking on the sea; but in the storm and darkness they did not know him, and cried out in fear, for they thought it was a spirit: but Jesus called to them, "It is I; be not afraid;" and with joy they received

him into the vessel. Most disbelievers in the supernatural would say, "No such event took place: it is one of those miraculous stories, that, however its appearance may be accounted for, we can only reject." But reject all the accounts that we have of levitation, and we reject the testimony of some of the most truthful as well as the most intelligent of mankind. By so doing, we place ourselves in the position of the wise savans who laughed at all the stories of stones falling from the skies, and pitied the credulity of mankind, till, lo! it was discovered that aerolites really did fall, that the earth was pelted by them continually, that the common people who had believed their eyes were right after all, and the sneering savans, who had decided in their ignorance how far the universe extended, were the only parties that needed to be pitied.

Levitation is a well-known fact to those conversant with spiritual phenomena, and they can readily believe in its exercise in past time. I have frequently held one end of a double-leafed dining-table, and had an unseen power lift the other so as to elevate the table completely from the floor. I have seen the same table turned completely round, without a human being touching it.

"Anna Fleischer, the wife of a resident of Freyburg, who was subject to epileptic fits, attended with violent convulsions and hallucinations, is stated by superintendent Müller to have often risen in the air, and once, in the presence of Deans Dachsel and Walburger and others, was raised two and a half yards from her bed in a horizontal position, and thus

floated freely in the air. Those present cried to God, caught hold of her, and brought her back; for it appeared to them as if she would go out of the window." [1]

"We have in history," says Calmet, "several instances of persons, full of religion and piety, who in the fervor of their orisons have been taken up into the air, and remained there for some time. I have known a good monk who rises sometimes from the ground, and remains suspended, without wishing it, especially on seeing some devotional image or hearing some devout prayer." [2]

Alfred Russel Wallace says, "Lord Orrery and Mr. Valentine Greatrakes both informed Dr. Henry More and Mr. Glanvil, that at Lord Conway's house, at Ragley in Ireland, a gentleman's butler, in their presence and in broad daylight, rose into the air, and floated about the room above their heads. . . . So we all know that at least fifty persons of high character may be found in London, who will testify that they have seen the same thing happen to Mr. Home." [3]

Lord Adare, in a work recently published by him [4] and quoted by Dr. Crowell, says, speaking of Home, "I took both his feet in my hands, and away he went up into the air, so high that I was obliged to let go his feet. He was carried along the wall, brushing past the pictures, to the opposite side of the room. He then called me over to him. I took his hand, and felt him alight upon the floor. At Adare Manor,

[1] Animal Magnetism, Dr. Lee, p. 325. [2] Ibid., p. 325.
[3] Miracles and Modern Spiritualism, by Dr. Crowell, p. 8.
[4] Experiences in Spiritualism with Mr. D. D. Home.

Ireland, all present saw him raised off the ground in the open air, and floating past them at a height which carried him clear over a wall, by a movement quite horizontal and uniform, a distance of ten or twelve yards."

Mr. William Crookes, editor of "The London Quarterly Journal of Science," says, "The most striking cases of levitation which I have witnessed have been with Mr. Home. On three separate occasions have I seen him raised completely from the floor of the room, — once sitting in an easy chair, once kneeling on his chair, and once standing up. On each occasion I had full opportunity of watching the occurrence as it was taking place." [1]

Such evidence does not, of course, prove that Jesus walked on the sea; but it takes such an event out of the realm of the supernatural.

The individuals subject to levitation, though frequently persons in whom the religious sentiments are active, are not necessarily so. Some I am personally acquainted with, who in this respect are not at all superior to the average of those around them.

One evening Jesus took his three favorite disciples, Peter, John and James, and went on to a mountain to pray. The disciples lay down, and went to sleep; and, when they awoke, they saw, to their great astonishment, that the face of their Master was shining, and his countenance altered, while his garments were white and glistering. They also saw two men standing and talking with him, and heard a voice

[1] Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism, vol. ii. p. 436.

come out of a cloud that overshadowed them: "This is my beloved Son: hear him."

A transformation of the countenance of the medium into the likeness of the spirit controlling is not a very uncommon phenomenon of mediumship. I have frequently seen the faces of mediums assume an Indian expression when they were professedly under the control of Indian spirits. The statement in Luke, that the countenance of Jesus was altered, agrees very well with what might have taken place in consequence of his control by a spirit; while the attendant illumination is explained by luminous appearances, which though by no means as common as spirit control, and transfiguration of the countenance, have been seen by many trustworthy observers. From a paper giving an account of phenomena observed at Mr. Home's circles, signed by John D. Lord, Rufus Elmer, and nine others, I find the following: "Lights are produced in dark rooms. Sometimes there appears a gradual illumination, sufficient to disclose very minute objects; and at others a tremulous phosphorescent light gleams over the walls, and odic emanations proceed from human bodies, or shoot, meteor-like, through the apartment." Lord Adare says of Home, "At No. 7, Buckingham Gate, he was in the air; and his head became quite luminous at the top, giving him the appearance of having a halo around it. When he was raised, he waved his arms about; and in each hand there came a little globe of fire." [1]

The two who were seen conversing with Jesus

[1] Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism, vol. ii. p. 27.

were probably materialized forms of spirits, such as have been seen by thousands of persons within the last thirty years; while the voice that was heard may have been the voice of the father of Jesus, desirous of assisting his well-beloved son. However wild such explanations may be deemed now, as spirit manifestations increase in frequency and power their reasonableness will become more and more apparent.

When we read that Jesus was "full of the Holy Ghost," that he "returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee," they seem to be indications of a condition resulting from his mediumship, and given in this form in consequence of the prevalent belief of the times.

Departed spirits take more interest in human affairs, and exercise a greater influence over human destiny, than the philosophers have ever recognized, or the historians been willing to grant. The "God of Israel," "the Angel of the Lord," and "Gabriel," who appear so frequently in the pages of the Old Testament, were, in all probability, spirits of the departed, who communicated with mortals as well as circumstances would allow; and they, having no conception of the natural character of the communication, supposed them to be apparitions of the universal Spirit, or its direct messenger.

Mohammed says that he saw an angel in human form, who commissioned him to be the prophet of his people. Joan of Arc heard "the voice of an angel," and eventually saw the form, which she describes very naturally, and contrary to the common opinion about angels, as being that "of a true and

comely gentleman." The appearances and words of that "comely gentleman" materially changed the history of France and England. Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Jesus, Swedenborg, Joanna Southcott, Ann Lee, Joseph Smith, and almost every religious enthusiast, appear to have been mediums for spiritual manifestations, which either produced or modified their peculiar condition; and such persons as those have probably done more to shape the religious views of the world than all others.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS.

The character of Jesus assisted him materially in gaining the confidence of his disciples and followers, and calling out that love in them which proved itself to be stronger than death, and led them to preach, with the utmost fervor, Jesus and him crucified. His life, as given in the Gospels, is necessarily one-sided. Written originally for the purpose of convincing men that he was the Messiah, his biographers related those sayings and deeds of his that would be most likely to produce that impression on the minds of the readers. They paint for us the sky, but not the clouds; or, if there are clouds, they hardly supposed them to be such: they give us the wise sayings of Jesus, but none of his jokes; sometimes the flashes of his indignation, but hardly any thing that can be called flashes of wit; they tell us that he wept, but they never tell us that he laughed. Yet there can be little doubt, that, with all this one-sidedness, we can obtain true glimpses of the man. Jesus was conscientious, — one who spoke what appeared to him to be true, regardless of all consequences; and this is one of the greatest virtues. The most hopeless of all men is the hypocrite: there

is more hope of a drunkard and a rowdy than of the most respectable pretender. Honesty is to the man what the back-bone is to the body: when that is left out of his composition, he is a jelly-fish prone on the sand, an object of pity to all who see his true condition.

From what is recorded of Jesus, we cannot imagine any honeyed words of flattery falling from his lips. Not a word to conciliate the rich, the men in office, the scribes, the Pharisees, the lawyers. These were the popular men, and the ones whose influence could have made him popular; but he denounces them without stint. He made extravagant promises to his humble followers, because he had the firmest belief that he could fulfil them; and, if he had been what he supposed he was, he certainly would. He shocks his own family, causes his friends to turn their backs upon him in consequence of his out-spokenness, and rebukes his disciples in the plainest manner when he thinks them wrong.

"Blessed are ye poor." What help could he expect from them? "Blessed are the meek." The last words that would have fallen from a dishonest man's lips. "Blessed are the merciful, the peace-makers, the reviled, and the persecuted." "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." "Woe unto you that are rich!" "Woe to you that are full!" "Woe to you scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers!" It is just as if a man should travel round, preach in the open air through the United States, and say, "Woe unto you bankers; blessed are ye tramps; woe unto you reverends, senators, and representatives! Put no money in banks or stocks. Blessed are the

laborers, and cursed are the men who live without labor on the produce of other people's labors." I can fancy some of the friends of Jesus coming to him, after a sermon embodying some of the sayings collected by the evangelist, and placed together in the mountain sermon: "You have destroyed your influence forever: what good you might do if you were less extravagant! You can never be popular while you preach after that fashion: you drive all the influential people away by such sermons as those." It is evident that Jesus cared more to preach what welled from his soul to his lips than to have the good opinion of every shekel-gatherer in Judæa.

When the rich young man desires to know what he shall do to inherit eternal life, he tells him to sell all that he has, and give to the poor, and come and follow him. What minister would tell a rich young man to sell all that he had, and give the proceeds to the poor, and then join his church? The reason of the difference is, that the ministers of to-day court popularity; while Jesus sought to deal honestly with men, and let popularity take care of itself. When persons professed a desire to unite with him, he advised them to count the cost, told them of dangers and persecutions that awaited them, and gave them to understand that they must be willing to risk even their lives in his cause. This honesty of Jesus has won for him the approbation even of the dishonest, while it has assisted materially in recommending his doctrines to honest and truthful minds.

Any thing like sham or mere pretence he unsparingly denounces. A man with large benevolence

despises the stingy, the muck-rakers; a true artist cannot bear a daub, nor can he feel at home among daubers; mistakes in music are excruciating to the musician whose soul is tuned to harmony: so Jesus, honest to the core, could not bear hypocrites who made long prayers, but swindled widows out of their houses, — who compassed sea and land to make a proselyte, only to make him worse than themselves. They are the children of hell, and he can see no way in which they can escape its damnation. He tells his followers to beware of the wolves in sheep's skin, "whose gospel is their maw." The species is by no means extinct. The man with a beam in his eye is, he thinks, a poor eye-doctor. Jesus sees in an honest Roman and a benevolent Samaritan true sons of Abraham, to whom is reserved chief seats in the heavenly kingdom; while the hypocritical pretenders, though they sat in Moses' seat, and were religious with their lips, can only behold their dazzling glory afar off as they drop into outer darkness.

When the young man comes inquiring what he shall do to inherit eternal life, he calls Jesus "Good Master;" but this is too much like flattery. Jesus knows well that his life falls far short of his own ideal of excellence; and he says, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one; that is, God." It would be well if many of his professed followers were as honest to-day, and as ready to discard flattering titles: we should have fewer reverends, right reverends, and holy fathers.

Akin to this, and springing in a great measure from his large conscientiousness, his intuitional

power, and faith in his Messiahship, was his detestation of ostentation and show. "When thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face." "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet." "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." As much as if he had said, "Your soul knows, and God knows: cannot you be satisfied with this, without parading your deeds before your fellows?" What he commended to others he generally practised himself. There is one notable exception, — that was when he rode into Jerusalem; but this was done to fulfil a prophecy, and he probably felt it under the circumstances to be a duty. When he cured people, he frequently told them to tell no one; when they called him Christ and the Son of God, he charged them that they should not make him known. The lofty position that he occupied in his own estimation lifted him above petty ambition. He cared but little about gathering followers, or making a name; for he was shortly coming in the clouds of heaven, and all nations should bow before him. Had he been politic, and ambitious of worldly success, he might, with his superior ability, have secured it: but he aimed at an infinitely higher position; and though he failed, yet he achieved more than even his success could have given him.

Jesus was a moral man, and the morality that he taught was of a high character. He drank the intoxicating wines of Palestine, containing more alcohol than the ales and beers of modern times; but there is little question, that, had he lived to-day, he would have been upon the side of abstinence from

all intoxicating drinks: the true nature of such drinks was but little known in his day. The morality of Judaism is almost entirely negative. "Thou shalt not" is the burden of the Decalogue, and a stone obeys nearly all its commands. When the lawyer asked Jesus which is the great commandment in the law, he never mentioned a command of the Decalogue at all, but the positive commands, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" and gave him to understand, by the parable of the Good Samaritan, that a man's neighbor is every one that needs his assistance. The Mosaic law said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Jesus looks to the spring that feeds the fountain, the internal desire, and declares, "He that looks upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Jewish love did not go outside of his holy land: all outsiders were enemies, and there was but hate for them. Jesus demands that love shall be universal, and brings even enemies within its heavenly influence. He places before men divine perfection as their ideal of excellence, and calls upon them to be perfect as their Father in heaven. He will not allow men to live merely for their own selfish enjoyment, regardless of the happiness of others; but, by the parable of the talents and the rich man, he shows that in his opinion those who have not been positive good-doers, who have not employed their lord's money to promote the well-being of their fellows, can only look for everlasting condemnation as the penalty for their selfishness. The declaration made of him was, "He

went about doing good;" and by so doing he has charmed even those who despised his doctrines, and set a noble example for his brethren as long as our planet shall bear humanity as its fruit.

But Jesus as generally represented by Christians is an impossible character. In his composition there is love without hate, charity with no mixture of intolerance, truth without the shadow of deceit. "He was without prejudice and partiality;" and, in a world where every thing is imperfect, he was perfection. Such beings exist only in fancy; and a perfect Jesus is not the man that lived in Nazareth and was crucified at Jerusalem.

Mohammedans make Mohammed equally perfect; and, by concealing the dark side of the man, we can present him as an angel of goodness. Let us hear what a Christian says of him: "He was easy of approach to all who wished to see him, even as 'the river-bank to him that draweth water therefrom.' He was fond of animals; and they, as is often the case, were fond of him. He seldom passed a group of children playing together without a few kind words to them; and he was never the first to withdraw his hand from the grasp of one who offered him his. If the warmth of his attachment may be measured, as in fact it may be, by the depth of his friends' devotion to him, no truer friend than Mohammed ever lived. He wept like a child over the death of his faithful servant Zeid. He visited his mother's tomb some fifty years after her death; and he wept there because he believed that God had forbidden him to pray for her. He was naturally shy and re-

tiring; 'as bashful,' said Ayesha, 'as a veiled virgin.' He was kind and forgiving to all. 'I served him from the time I was eight years old,' said his servant Anas; 'and he never scolded me for any thing, though I spoiled much.' When asked to curse some one, he replied, 'I have not been sent to curse, but to be a mercy to mankind.' . . . His ordinary dress was plain even to coarseness. . . . His life was simple in all its details. . . . He would kindle the fire, sweep the floor, and milk the goats himself. Ayesha tells us that he slept upon a leathern mat, and that he mended his clothes, and even clouted his shoes, with his own hand. . . . The little food he had was always shared with those who dropped in to partake of it. Indeed, outside the prophet's house was a bench or gallery, on which were always to be found a number of the poor who lived entirely on the prophet's generosity, and were hence called 'people of the bench.' His ordinary food was dates and water, or barley-bread: milk and honey were luxuries of which he was fond, but which he rarely allowed himself."[1] He drank no intoxicating drink, nor would he allow his followers to drink it.

But, if any man thinks that this is a fair representation of the character of Mohammed, he knows but little of human nature. Mark the lion and his family under the shade in the thicket, after dining upon an antelope: see his noble countenance, his shining eye, his flowing mane: he is more beautiful than a gazelle; playful as a kitten, as his whelps tumble over him; gentle as a lamb; but, when hunger has roused the

[1] Mohammed and Mohammedanism. R. Bosworth Smith, M.A.

other side of his nature, he is the most brutal of beasts.

When Mohammed was poor and despised, he was very tolerant; but as he became popular, and his power increased, his other nature, that had been asleep, wakened up, hungry for its prey. Then came the command, "Believe, serve, or die!" and his followers massacred myriads in the name of Allah the Merciful.

If Jesus had lived to see a million followers under his banner, he would not have been content to say of Chorazin and Bethsaida, "Woe unto you!" "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you." He would have hastened the time. That he had the disposition, many passages indicate. If men refused to receive his disciples, or hear their words, they were to shake the dust off their feet when they departed, as a testimony against them; and he declares it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for them. If Mohammed had always been poor and despised, with a score of followers, and always as tolerant as he was at the beginning of his mission, we should still have known his intolerant disposition; for his denunciations of the unbelievers reveal his secret soul. The man who could write, "They who believe not shall have garments of fire fitted unto them; boiling water shall be poured on their heads; their bowels shall be dissolved thereby, and also their skins; and they shall be beaten with iron maces: so often as they shall endeavor to get out of hell, because of the anguish

of their torments, they shall be dragged back into the same; and their tormentors shall say unto them, 'Taste ye the pain of burning!'"[1] — must be at heart a persecutor, and only needs favorable circumstances to make him one. When Jesus, as in Matt. xxv., represents the King as saying, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," he shows in the same way the dark side of his nature, — an intolerant and revengeful disposition. For who is this King that shall say, "Depart, ye cursed," to the doomed wretches who stand trembling before his throne? It is the "blessed Jesus, meek and mild." He is merely projecting himself into the future, when he expects to have the power; and we can see the use that he intended to make of it.

But we are told, that, when the Samaritans in a certain village refused to receive Jesus because he was journeying to Jerusalem, James and John wished to know if they might command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them; but Jesus rebuked them, and said, "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." The probability is, that Jesus felt at that time as kindly as he spoke. It must be remembered, however, that neither Jesus nor his disciples had any power to call down fire from heaven; and, if Jesus had given them permission, it would only have ended in showing them his impotence and theirs, and weakening or destroying their faith in his miraculous power.

That Jesus was superior to Mohammed, there can

[1] Koran, chap. xxii.

be but little doubt; that he was a true friend and a lover of his race, there can be no question: but he who represents him as perfection is unjust to him. Most of his worshippers bow down to a phantom of their own or their father's creation, while they reject the real man. When Jesus denounced the scribes and Pharisees and lawyers (Matt. xxiii.); when he cursed the barren fig-tree (Matt. xxi. 19); when he drove the cattle-dealers and money-changers out of the temple with a scourge (John ii. 15); when he told his disciples to sell their garments, and buy swords (Luke xxii. 36); when he said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Matt. xvi. 23); when he called the Pharisees bad names because they desired to see a sign of his Messiahship (Matt. xvi. 4); when he said to the Syrophœnician woman, when she asked him to cure her daughter, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to the dogs" (Matt. xv. 26); when he called Herod a fox (Luke xiii. 32); when his disciples failed to cure a lunatic, and Jesus said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and suffer you?" (Luke ix. 41); when he indirectly called the Pharisee a fool who invited him to dinner (Luke xi. 40),—he showed very clearly that he was one of us, subject to like passions, as brute-developed humanity has always been; and that to represent him as a God-man, or even a perfect man, is to teach what even the partial record of his friendly biographers shows to be untrue.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MISTAKES OF JESUS.

THE mistakes that Jesus made were great and numerous. His belief in the miraculous was unbounded. He constantly sought to increase that faith in others; and his doctrines on that subject have done much to produce the unphilosophic notions about the supernatural that so many entertain to-day. God clothes the grass of the field: he will much more clothe his children. He will give good things to them when they ask him; but sometimes, as he teaches by a parable (Luke xi. 5–8), it is necessary to tease him, — to keep asking until they weary him into granting their request. If two shall agree about any thing which they may ask, God will do it for them (Matt. xviii. 19).

Nothing can be farther from the truth than such representations. God does not clothe the grass, unless there is soil for the grass to grow in, and conditions have been favorable for the seed of the grass to obtain a suitable position in the soil. God clothes no grass in California from June to November, because there is no rain. There are no good things that we can get by merely asking God for them. The price even of life is labor; and no asking, or even

teasing, will enable us to evade the unalterable laws, which regard the prayer of the bishop no more than the hum of the beetle. When men profess to support orphan-asylums and hospitals by prayer, it will be found that extensive advertising does the work, and prayer obtains the credit.

"If you had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, you might say to this mountain, Remove, and be cast into the sea, and it would remove; and nothing would be impossible to you" (Matt. xvii. 20; Mark xi. 23). All the facts demonstrate, that, if we had faith as a mountain, we could not say to a grain of mustard-seed, "Remove, and be cast into the sea," with any prospect of its accomplishment.

In accordance with these doctrines of Jesus are the prayers that are offered by the million, generally by people who mean well, and under the influence of religious sentiment, but undirected by cultivated judgment. All is natural, from the birth of a gnat to the extinction of a sun, the father of a thousand worlds. Here is a hill: a hard rock beneath it withstood the fury of the elements for ages; and thus it was produced. The people on the globe are as natural as the rocks they tread upon. The Indian is what ages of wandering and war have made him; and his disposition can only approximate that of the Anglo-Saxon by the operation of higher influences upon many generations. We are what India, Greece, Rome, Gaul, Britain, and America have made us. In many an American of to-day the shillalah Irishman of a century ago occasionally crops out. We are more musical for the shepherds of Greece, who

played on their pipes as they watched their flocks. The men who wrote Bibles developed the brain by which other men criticise them. A careful study of the New Testament and the times when it was composed shows that Jesus, his disciples, and Christianity were all as natural as the appearance of a comet, or the occurrence of an eclipse. These were once regarded as supernatural: every comet was a miraculous messenger, every eclipse foretold some disaster. The astronomer has removed miracle from the skies: the theologian will eventually remove it from religion.

Jesus prays, and teaches his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come." His followers to-day pray, "Lord, revive thy work." All such prayers are requests for a miracle-worker to perform the impossible. Had the persons who offer them lived in the carboniferous age, when the highest animals of the world were reptiles, they would have prayed, "Thy kingdom come; O God, improve thy work!" that is, convert these hopping frogs and scaly fishes into birds and beasts and men. God did improve his work; but it took ages for the needed improvement to take place, by causes such as had been operating for millions of ages previous, and that still are pushing the planet on. The reptile was infinitely lower than the worst man; and if God never performed a miracle to transform reptiles into men, but allowed the slow operation of natural causes to produce the result, why should we expect him now to advance by miracle low grades of men into higher? If the nebulæ in the distant heavens are, under the domain of law, condensing into

suns and worlds, and only during ages that are an eternity to our thought advancing to life and intelligence, how can we expect human beings to be hurried by miracle?

Jesus thought that Moses and the prophets referred to him as the Messiah who should come to deliver Israel. At Nazareth he read Isaiah's prophecy, and applied it to himself. One of the last things that he did, according to Luke xxiv., was to refer to what was written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning him. In vain do we search the Scriptures to find any such passages: it is only by violent and unfair interpretations that any passage in the Old Testament can be made into a prediction of the Nazarene.

The prophecy that is supposed most clearly to refer to Jesus is contained in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. How distinctly, say some, this designates the Man of Nazareth! The prophet looks forward over eight centuries, and sees him as clearly as we can when we look back eighteen centuries. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not

his mouth. For the transgression of my people was he stricken." By picking out certain portions of the prophecy, and presenting them as continuous, there certainly does appear a portrait not unlike the Christian conception of Jesus. But, when we look at other features of the prophecy, the likeness is not so clear. "He hath no form nor comeliness; and, when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He was taken from prison: he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." We have no reason to believe that Jesus was destitute of beauty, and without form and comeliness: the probability is that he was good-looking. Jesus was never in prison: he did not make his grave with the wicked, nor was he with the rich in his death. It is evident also that the person referred to was not some one to come, but a person who had lived. "He *was* despised," "he *hath borne* our griefs," "he *was* wounded," &c.

When we learn that the writer of the prophecy was in all probability a person living at about the close of the Babylonish captivity, we can see to whom the so-called prophecy probably refers. Dean Milman says, "It is well known that the later chapters of Isaiah (last twenty-seven) are attributed by the common consent of most of the profoundly learned writers of Germany . . . to a different writer, whom they call the great nameless prophet, or the second Isaiah, who wrote during the exile."[1] The most prominent person before the Jewish people at that time, who could properly be called a servant of the Lord, was Jere-

[1] Smith's Bible Dictionary, art. Isaiah.

miah; and the whole of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, as far as we know, is applicable to him.

Jesus can hardly be called with propriety "a man of sorrows;" though, like all other men, he was at times sorrowful. Jeremiah was emphatically a man of sorrows; for he lived in the most sorrowful time that the Jews ever knew, and he sympathized most deeply with the sufferings of his brethren. In Lam. iii. 1, he says, "I am a man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath." "Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people" (ver. 48). The very title of this work, the Lamentations, shows the sorrowful nature of the man. The treatment that he received at the hands of the people, as described by himself, is in perfect keeping with the statements in Isaiah: "I was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day" (Lam. iii. 14). "Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, without cause. They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me" (Lam. iii. 52, 53). "Our fathers hath sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities" (Lam. v. 7). The fact is, that the prophets of Israel concerned themselves about what was important to the people of their time, and seldom looked forward to any distant future. If the Jews were at war with Babylon, they denounced it: "Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant." We can hardly consider this to be fulfilled, as some assure us, when there are to-day 8,000 people on its site. When Rezin, King of Damascus, attacks Jerusalem, Isaiah

fulminates: "Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap" (Isa. xvii. 1). The wish seems in almost every case to have been the father of the prophecy; and as in the case of Damascus, which has always been a flourishing city, both were often far from being gratified or fulfilled.

Jesus himself was no better prophet than his predecessors. Within the very generation in which he lived the sun was to be darkened, the moon to withhold her light, the stars to fall, the sign of the Son of man was to appear in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth were to mourn: for they should see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; his angels, with the sound of a trumpet, were to gather his elect from one end of heaven to the other (Matt. xxiv. 29–34). Paul never expected to die, but to ascend with the elect when the angelic trumpet should blow; and he comforts the Thessalonians with this advent promise, which he evidently believed in consequence of his faith in the prophecy of Jesus: "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then *we which are alive and remain* shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 15–18). The early Christians looked daily for the coming of their Master. Are they slaves? It matters little to be free: the Lord will

soon come. The bachelor cares not to marry: the Lord will soon take him to himself. Why should a man hoard, when the world might be burnt up in a week? So they sold their possessions, and laid the money at the apostles' feet for distribution among the needy.

Eighteen centuries are gone; fifty generations have passed: the same skies are over us that were over Jesus, and they look no older. The faithful still watch for the sign; they listen for the trumpet's sound; and death has found millions at their post. The clouds of heaven are only vapor, and the stars are suns that cannot fall; and the prophecy never can be fulfilled.

The greatest mistake that Jesus made was his indorsement of the Jewish scriptures; accepting their statements as true, and their doctrines as divine. The Noachian deluge presents no difficulties to him, and he believes in the ark as he does in the temple. Even the story of Jonah, that almost every Christian minister would like to cut adrift from the gospel-ship, Jesus accepts, but, true to his nature, believes himself greater than Jonah, and thinks the Capernaumites should have repented at his preaching as the Ninevites did at Jonah's. By taking this position, Jesus saddled on the new religion most of the defects of the old. Adam and Eve were accepted to account for humanity; and a childish cosmogony went with them, that even now fetters men's minds, and prevents their acceptance of the revelations of science. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were believed by Jesus to have held intimate relations with the Deity.

Moses received his laws directly from him, and the Jews were his especial favorites. Thus the infinite soul was contracted to a span; the universal Father became a Jacob, with a pet son, for whom he made a spiritual coat, while the rest of his children were left bare. It is true that Jesus taught much that was superior to the old faith; he was far in advance of those whose highest conception of a God was Jehovah: but how common it is for the dead past to rule the living present!

> "We see with dead men's eyes,
> Looking at was from morn till night,
> When the beauteous now, the divine to be,
> Woo with their charms the living sight."

In some respects, the doctrine of Jesus is inferior to that of Moses and the prophets. He taught that there will be a day of universal judgment, when all nations shall be gathered before him as he sits upon a glorious throne; and he will separate them into two classes, righteous and wicked. The righteous he will welcome to his kingdom and everlasting life, while he will consign the wicked to everlasting fire.

Judaism curses the disobedient in his basket and store, his down-sitting and up-rising, and in all that he puts his hand to do; but it never followed the wretch into the land of spirits, and cursed him there forever for the deeds done or undone during his momentary stay in the body.

A day of judgment is as unnecessary as it is unreasonable and its prophesied sentences unjust. The universal King is always here, and he can, therefore,

never come in the clouds; the day of judgment is every day; no sooner is the deed done than the culprit stands at the bar; the witness within him needs neither to be called nor sworn, and can never be bribed; the sentence is pronounced instantly, and the just award is not for a moment delayed. If men at death go to heaven or hell, of what possible use can a day of judgment be? If each person's case took but a minute, more than a million years would be consumed by the world's assize; and, while the criminals were waiting for their turn, the list of their crimes would be awfully lengthened.

Mankind can no more be divided into righteous and wicked than they can be into wise and ignorant, — none so ignorant but he knows something, none so wise but he is ignorant of what is important for him to know: so there is no liar who does not tell more truths than lies, no thief whose honest deeds do not outnumber his dishonest ones. The worst men respect goodness, and to the best men wickedness is at times fearfully attractive. From the worst man to the best, there is an infinite gradation; and every step is occupied by some human being, whom absolute justice could neither place on the right hand nor on the left.

CHAPTER IX.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF JESUS.

THAT a correct life of Jesus should be written from the scanty and contradictory materials furnished us by the Gospels is manifestly impossible; and, when persons undertake to do it, they generally succeed in writing a novel, or it may be a romance, of which Jesus is the hero. The persons who first sketched the life of Jesus never wrote a line till he was dead; and they had no assistance from pre-existing documents. When we think how in our own time reporters will put sentences into a speaker's mouth that he never uttered, and publish them within twenty-four hours; how difficult it is to obtain the exact truth in regard to matters that took place but yesterday, and even when we know the witnesses to be honest; how we have of late discovered the fabulous character of much that had passed as genuine history unchallenged for hundreds of years, — we perceive the utter impossibility of obtaining the exact truth with regard to Jesus from the Gospels. Yet by familiarizing ourselves with the time and country in which Jesus lived, by comparing his life as given by the evangelists with that of other men who were in many respects similar to him, and shedding upon

it the light that psychometry, clairvoyance, and the facts of modern spiritualism, furnish, we may form an outline of this remarkable man much nearer the truth than the portrait generally drawn.

It is not probable that Jesus was the son of Joseph. According to Matthew and Luke, he was not; and it is unlikely that the idea of a God-begotten child in any other than a spiritual sense could ever have originated among a Jewish people, unless there had been some powerful motive to give rise to it. Joseph declared that he was not his father, if we are to credit the statements of Matthew and Luke; and the natural inference is, that he was illegitimate. But who could believe in an illegitimate Messiah? As a consequence, the idea of a miraculous conception would arise in the minds of a superstitious class, and grow stronger as the doctrines of Jesus became more popular, his character more exalted, and converts were made among other nations, who had less objection than the Jews to the intercourse of gods with mortals. The man who had never attained at a ripe age to any higher station than that of a carpenter in a Galilean hamlet,[1] who allowed himself to be governed by his dreams in the most important movements of his obscure life, whose only claim to notice is that he was the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus, was never the father of the daring, restless innovator, the bold and eloquent enunciator of new doctrine, who regarded himself as the first of mankind, and all men as born to be his followers. One

[1] Nazareth was so small a place, that it is not mentioned either in the Old Testament or in Josephus.

of his recent Orthodox biographers calls Joseph "a simple-minded man;" but this simple-minded man could never, in the nature of things, have been the father of such a man as Jesus, who was the very opposite.

The Gospels give us no idea of the personal appearance of Jesus; and there is perhaps but little confidence to be placed in the description given of him by some unknown writer, probably of the fourth century: "His hair is the color of wine, and golden at the root; straight and without lustre, but from the level of the ears curling and glossy, and divided down the centre after the fashion of the Nazarenes; his forehead is even and smooth; his face without blemish, and enhanced by a tempered bloom; his countenance ingenuous and kind; nose and mouth are in no way faulty; his beard is full, of the same color as his hair, and forked in form; his eyes blue, and extremely brilliant." Yet it is a little remarkable that this description is not that of a Jew, nor any one of the Shemitic race. It describes a person of pure Aryan type: it may be thought on the same principle that Chinese artists represent Europeans with oblique eyes: there may, however, have been another cause. But, although we know nothing of the personal appearance of Jesus, his mental characteristics are well known to us; and races can be distinguished almost as well by their mental as their physical peculiarities. We are what all our ancestors have made us, and Jesus was no exception to this rule.

The mental characteristics of Jesus are more Ro-

man or Grecian than Jewish. The passages collected from his discourses, and put into what is called the Sermon on the Mount, and which bear the stamp of his genius, indicate great breadth of soul. It is easy to criticise them, not difficult to find faults in them; but they present to us a man very different from any Jew that history makes us acquainted with up to his time. Portions of them but few of the most advanced are abreast of even now; and the spirit that animates them is broad as humanity. The man who speaks has mastered the peace question, and discovered that love is sharper than the sword, and more effective than the catapult. He lays the foundation for a brotherhood of man, in which there shall be none cursed by poverty nor spoiled by riches, and gives that golden rule which in three lines contains more than a thousand volumes of legal lore. There is no puffing of Zion, no praise of Jerusalem, none of the Jewish pride that looked down with contempt upon the Gentiles; and it is easy to see that the preacher is higher than Moses even when he was on Sinai, and broader than the heritage of Jacob. The Jew was generally zealous of the law, and punctilious in its observance; and the relations of Jesus on his mother's side were of this character. Jesus pays very little attention to ceremony, and sets the law frequently at defiance. He heals on the sabbath day; he plucks ears of corn as he and his disciples ramble through the fields, and proclaims himself Lord of the holy day. He teaches that the kernel of the commandments is love to God and man, and the rest is but the husk. The Jews were exclusive: they

had no dealings with the Samaritans, and despised them. Jesus visits them; talks with them; represents one of the best characters in one of his most beautiful parables as a Samaritan. He places humanity above doctrine, and makes charity lord over faith. It is true that his Messianic ideas may have had much to do with this breadth of spirit; but a man less broad naturally would never have embraced such ideas. Had Jesus been the son of Joseph, there would have been a greater resemblance between him and his brethren, children of the same parents. We find from the Gospels that they did not believe in him;[1] and they seem to have taken no interest in him, save perhaps to try to restrain him as one who was deranged,[2] until his doctrine had become acceptable to large numbers, and something was to be gained by acknowledging their relation to him. Even then, had it not been for the energetic movements of a few more like Jesus, they would have fettered the infant church with Jewish ordinances and superstitions, so that it never could have obtained a footing outside of the bounds of Judæa. Of one of his brothers, James, who became bishop of Jerusalem, Renan says, "What we know of this James gives us an idea of a character so far removed from that of Jesus, that one can hardly believe that two men so different could be born of the same mother."[3] If he had said, be begotten by the same father, his remark would have been perfectly appropriate. Again he says, "The very surprising fact remains, that two children of the same parents or the same family should have

[1] John vii. 5. [2] Mark iii. 21. [3] Apostles, chap. iii.

been at first enemies, should then have become reconciled, to remain so entirely distinct, — that the only well-known brother of Jesus should have been a sort of Pharisee, an outward ascetic, a devotee, infected with all the ridiculous practices which Jesus relentlessly pursued."[1] His brother Jude, the author of the epistle which bears his name, seems to have resembled James very closely.

Whence came the nature of Jesus, so different from that of his nation, and even from that of members of his own family? Certainly not from Joseph: then from some other man. Who was he? No common soldier, as the Talmud teaches. No Jewish maiden, such as Mary appears to have been, could have been tempted to such an alliance. That Jesus was of royal blood, an old Jewish record mentions.[2] Some have fancied that an improper connection with the Herodian family is indicated; but Jesus bears no resemblance to any one of that Idumean stock, with which we are acquainted, who could have been his father.

Many views may be taken of the connection that resulted in the birth of Jesus, in perfect harmony with the innocence and chastity of Mary, in which I believe. That Mary in her youth was not always confined to the Galilean village which was her home is shown by her visit to the hill-country of Judæa previous to the birth of Jesus, where she may have met and married the father of Jesus, whom we may

[1] Renan's St. Paul.

[2] Sanhedrin, f. 43, 1. Quoted by Keim in History of Jesus of Nazareth.

presume was no Jew, a person of distinguished ability, and probably of high position, whose marriage with the Jewish maiden was known to but few.

It is supposed by sceptics that Jesus was born in Nazareth; for the taxing under Cyrenius, which supplies the motive for the visit to Bethlehem according to Luke ii. 12, did not take place till some years after the birth of Jesus. There may, however, have been another motive: the well-known prophecy of Mic. v. 2 appeared to require the Messiah to be born in Bethlehem; and Mary and Joseph, the father of Jesus having died, may have gone there for that very purpose, both believing that the child to be born would be the chosen deliverer of their people. Joseph not being the father of Jesus, we see the propriety of his conduct as represented in Matt. i. 22, and probable accuracy of the statement.

The birth of Jesus took place probably in the spring of A.D. 4, and not 4 B.C. as has been generally supposed; Herod the Great having been dead for several years, and Archelaus reigning over Judea, Samaria, and Idumæa, subject to the will of Cæsar. The old Herod, seventy years of age, in the last stage of dropsy, seeking to put an end to his miseries with his life, — what probability is there that he was jealous of a possible king of the Jews in the person of a baby in Bethlehem? His son Archelaus might have been, if the child's father was of sufficient importance.

The journey to Egypt was no fiction, though probably made by sea; and Joseph may have followed his business in Alexandria, then under the dominion of

the Romans, where the Jews were numerous, and a portion of the city was set apart for their residence.

When Archelaus was banished, Joseph and his family returned to Nazareth, the home to which they must have longingly looked during their residence in Egypt; and the boy was introduced to the fruitful valleys, the breezy limestone hills, and the beautiful and extended prospects, of that pleasant neighborhood. Here he watched his reputed father as he repaired the old houses, and helped to build the residences for the new-comers. We may fancy him running barefoot over the hills, gathering lilies and hollyhocks, which abound to-day in the vicinity; playing with his brothers and sisters; attending the village school, the teacher of which was the reader of the synagogue; and on Saturdays listening to the law and its explanation, and watching the figures that flitted before his closed eyes, till sleep relieved him from the ill-understood and little-cared-for homily.

Being a natural clairvoyant, whose spiritual faculties were intuitively exercised for the acquisition of knowledge, he manifested considerable intelligence at an early period, asking questions in reference to subjects on which children of his age but seldom think.

The visit of Mary to her cousin Elisabeth, the wife of Zecharias, who must have lived near to Jerusalem, was not the first that she had made, we may be sure, nor yet the last; and Jesus, and John who eventually became the Baptist, must have had many opportunities for mutual acquaintance. The conver-

sation of John and Jesus at his baptism shows a somewhat familiar knowledge of each other; while their kinship and the intimate relations existing between their mothers render their close acquaintance almost a certainty. The fourth Gospel, it is true, represents John as saying that he did not know him; yet even in that Gospel the statements of the writer show that he did.

When Jesus was twelve years of age, he went to Jerusalem with his parents to attend a national feast. They had returned a day's journey before they discovered that the boy was missing. Other children, younger and less self-reliant, needed their care; and they probably supposed that he was with their friends, and, in any event, was well able to take care of himself. Finding him not among their acquaintances, they returned to Jerusalem, and after three days discovered him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions; they astonished at the mature intelligence that he displayed, and the boy delighted at the opportunity to obtain answers to questions that Joseph and his mother had been unable to give. When they chided him for having thus deserted them, he said, "Why did you seek me? did you not know that I must attend to my Father's business?" It is not unreasonable to see in his reply a reflection of lessons given him by his mother, who had been preparing her son for the work that she believed God had sent him to do.

From this time till Jesus was about thirty, the Gospels are entirely silent regarding him. Had he

been asleep during the whole period, they could not have ignored this portion of his life more fully. What incidents must have been crowded into those eighteen years! — work at Nazareth; assistance rendered Joseph, so that Jesus became known as a carpenter; talks and walks with John; conversations with his uncle Zecharias; rambles along the shore of Gennesaret; sails on the water with the fishermen; companionship with persons of the opposite sex (for Jesus was of a loving disposition, and very attractive to women); and visits to Essene communities (he was probably too independent to become a member). The restless spirit of Jesus never allowed him to live contentedly at Nazareth, and his character is not such a one as could have been formed in a secluded village. No man could have talked as Jesus did without opportunity for development. Jesus was naturally a great talker; and he must have conversed with multitudes, from the polished scribe to the unsophisticated fisherman, in the temple's court, at the synagogue's door, and in the fisherman's hut, long before he was thirty. The sons of Zebedee and Jonas never left their employment to wander around the country with an entire stranger who had no visible means of support; and Jesus was never permitted to officiate in the synagogue at Nazareth till he had previously been before the public, and become fitted for the work. There must have been an active life regarding which the Gospels are silent. The discourses of Jesus indicate an acquaintance with Jerusalem, and the parties there, that is inexplicable if we suppose him to have lived in seclusion at Nazareth till he was bap-

tized by John. If we had the works of Josephus as they left his hand, we might know something of the movements of Jesus and John before the baptism.

The superscription over the head of Jesus, "The King of the Jews," indicates a political connection on his part that is not explained by any thing in the Gospel history. Jesus had a good deal of the lion in his composition, as well as the lamb. The death of both John and Jesus was caused perhaps as much, or more, by their political as by their religious movements. The high moral and spiritual position taken by Jesus, as reflected in the Gospels, may have been taken only when experiment had demonstrated the futility of all other. Rejected as a political Messiah, accepted eventually as a spiritual deliverer, all that portion of his life relating to his political movements would be prudently left out of the record, while all that referred to him as a religious teacher and spiritual guide, all that would assist in making him acceptable as the Christ, would be brought prominently forward.

Josephus relates that Herod feared a popular excitement on account of John's great influence over the people. He says, "Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion (for they seemed ready to do any thing he should advise), thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late" (Ant. xviii. 5, 2). There must have been a more

potent cause than the mere fear of possible mischief from John's popularity: an actual political and revolutionary movement could alone justify the death of such a man as John; and a rebellion produced by John's instrumentality, with his ideas of Jesus, would be for the purpose of making Jesus king, overthrowing both Herodian and Roman rule.

It was said to Jesus at one time, "Get thee out, and depart hence; for Herod will kill thee." There could have been no reason for Herod to kill Jesus, or for the idea to be advanced, had his methods been always as peaceful as they are represented in the Gospels.

Jesus, long before his public ministrations, discovered his possession of clairvoyant and healing power, which he exercised for the cure of diseases among the poor and ignorant by whom he was surrounded. This naturally led him to the belief that he was superior to those around him, especially when added to the impressions made by the teaching of his mother, who had never lost faith that her son was to be the Redeemer of Israel. John, from his intimate acquaintance with Jesus, knows of his peculiar powers, and believes in his Messiahship; and he and Jesus probably made many attempts to rouse the masses to resistance against the Romans, — attempts that had to be made with secrecy, and, in consequence of their failure, are of course unrecorded in books written to show that Jesus was the spiritual Messiah, "meek and lowly," and were probably unknown to the compilers of our Gospels. It must be remembered that the accounts regarding the times in

which Jesus lived have come down to us through the hands of unscrupulous men, who had no hesitation about doing any thing to help their cause. The men who forged such a passage relating to Jesus as we find in Josephus[1] could have no hesitation in removing any thing unfavorable to him; and their success in doing the latter would be as probable as the former. One of the accusations brought against Jesus at his trial was (Luke xxiii. 2), "We found him perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ, a king."

There must have been much study of the so-called Messianic prophecies by Jesus, John, and their friends. At first accepting the common view of the Messiah as a political deliverer, a king who should sit upon the throne at Jerusalem, and this being found impracticable, they conclude that the needed change can only come by supernatural power, and the destruction of all existing conditions. The prophecies of Daniel taught that the God of heaven would set up a kingdom that should break in pieces and destroy all other kingdoms (ii. 44): the kingdom was to be given to the Son of man; and all people, nations, and languages were to serve him (vii. 13, 14). The Messiah, evidently the same person as the Son of man, was to be cut off: then one like the Son of man was

[1] Antiquities, xviii. 3, 3. Whiston remarks, in a note upon the second chapter of the eighteenth book of the Jewish Antiquities of Josephus, that "after the death of Herod the Great, and the succession of Archelaus, Josephus is very brief in his accounts of Judæa till near his own time." He thinks the reason is because he had few good histories of the time before him; but it may be because of what was unfavorable to Christianity having been left out.

to come with the clouds of heaven, whose dominion was to be an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom one that should never be destroyed. "We shall never," they say, "be able to overthrow the power of Rome, and deliver our people from the yoke of the oppressor, by any ordinary instrumentalities. The kingdom of heaven must be established. The Messiah must first be revealed, who shall be a preacher to the poor, a healer of the sick, the despised and rejected of men, numbered with the transgressors; but he shall come in the clouds of heaven, break in pieces all earthly kingdoms, establish the kingdom of God, and reign with his believers and followers forever." John believes himself to be the Elijah prophesied of by Malachi, who was to appear before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, — the voice of one crying in the wilderness, and preparing the way of the Lord, as Isaiah had foretold; and Jesus is the Messiah. When he arrives at this conclusion, he goes out and sounds the tocsin, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and that means that the Messiah is about to be revealed, and all earthly kingdoms are to be destroyed.

Hearing of the death of Joseph, his reputed father, Jesus hastens to Nazareth; but not long could he remain in that secluded spot. He learns that his friend John is baptizing in Jordan; that the people are flocking in thousands to him. He leaves Nazareth, and is baptized of John in Jordan; though John, recognizing his superiority, declares that he has more need to be baptized of Jesus than Jesus has of him. Coming out of the water, he has a spiritual vision:

"the heavens are open to him;" and he hears a voice (it may have been the voice of his father), "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This encourages him, and nerves him for the grand struggle that is taking place in his mind: "Shall I be a political deliverer, fighting my way to the throne, filling the land with violence and blood, but conquering, and becoming a universal King? or am I to be a spiritual Messiah, despised and rejected, scorned by the rich and influential, but upheld by my Father, who will in his own time give me the throne, and make me Lord of all?"

While this struggle is going on in his mind, society is distasteful to him: he wishes to be alone till the decision is made. He accordingly goes into a wild region, probably between the place of baptism and Jerusalem, where he fasts for many days; for the mental struggle through which he was passing took away for a time all appetite for food. While in this condition, temptations of various kinds were presented to him. He became hungry. He believed himself to be in a peculiar sense the Son of God. Had he not heard the voice saying, "This is my beloved Son"? Why not, then, be able to transform the stones into bread? He probably tried the experiment, and then concluded that the suggestion was a temptation of the Devil. Wandering into Jerusalem, he goes to the wing or battlement of the temple; and, looking down a fearful depth into the valley of Jehoshaphat beneath, he is tempted to throw himself off; for, if the Messiah, why should not angels bear him up? His faith fails him, and

he considers this another temptation of the Evil One. He then climbs one of the mountains with which Palestine abounds; and, as his eye takes in the extended prospect, there comes a death-struggle. "Shall I give up my political prospects, by which I may make myself master of the world? or shall I rely on God, and trust my future in his hands?" Faith conquers: the Tempter departs. "I will be the deliverer of my people, of the world, not by sword or spear, but with infinitely better weapons. The kingdom of heaven is at hand; the herald has already been sent to proclaim it; and I am chosen by the King of heaven to establish it. Rome rules the world; holds the feebler nations with a death-grip that God alone by miracle can break. The only prospect of deliverance must come from a celestial source. I am the instrument chosen by God, and will do my part, if need be to death." The satanic personality and operation, as represented in the Gospels, probably arose from a peculiar trance-like condition produced by fasting and excitement.

He goes forth and preaches, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." John had announced it, in anticipation of the advent of Jesus, as Jesus preaches it in anticipation of the result of his own mission. Multitudes flock to hear him; for he speaks earnestly and with power. He is a messenger — as he believes — from God, a mouth-piece of Jehovah. He cures with a word or a touch many who are afflicted, and, in season and out of season, preaches "the gospel of the kingdom."

The meetings in the synagogues every sabbath

day gave him excellent opportunities to present his claims, of which he was not slow to take advantage. On one occasion he went, as he had frequently done, into the synagogue of his own village, Nazareth, and stood up to read. The Book of Isaiah was handed to him; and he read a passage which shows what subject occupied his mind, and what he regarded as the most important lesson for his countrymen to learn (Luke iv. 18–19). "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." When he had read it, he said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." A study of this passage may have done much in shaping his life during the time of his public ministrations. By comparing this passage with the one in Isa. lxi. 1–3, it will be seen how language becomes altered by being translated and copied. The passage, though a beautiful one, is no prophecy of Jesus, as we see when we read its connection in Isa. lxi. 1–4–6: "They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord; men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves."

It is the hopeful language of a poetic, proud, and bigoted Jew, near the close of the Babylonish captivity, as he looks over his desolate country, its cities waste, its land-owners feeding their scanty flocks, ploughing their grounds, and dressing the vines with their own hands, where their ancestors had lived in affluence, while many of the best men are still in prison, and at the mercy of the Gentile; and thus he encourages them: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me: he has commissioned me to preach glad tidings to ye poor; to heal your broken hearts; to proclaim liberty to those who are still captives, and the opening of the prison-doors to the bound. There is a better time coming, O my countrymen! — the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God. He will give you beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Ye shall build up the old wastes, the desolations shall depart, and the ruined cities shall be repaired. Ye shall conquer the Gentiles, and make slaves of them as they have made slaves of you: they shall stand and feed your flocks, and their sons shall be your ploughmen and vine-dressers; ye shall eat their riches, and clothe yourselves with their glory; and ye shall be priests of the Lord, and ministers of our God." Such is the substance of his prophecy.

It is evident that this has no reference whatever to Jesus: the writer was comforting his countrymen with promises of a better time, that they were to live to enjoy. Nor was he dreaming of Palestine as it was in the time of Jesus, struggling

helplessly in the iron grasp of Rome; still less of any spiritual deliverer like Jesus, whose advent would herald, not the deliverance, but the destruction, of his nation.

The Jews in the time of Jesus, looking for consolation in every quarter, probably did regard the passage as a prophecy of the Messiah, and as applicable to their time; and when he closed the book, and the eyes of all were fastened upon him, they were delighted to hear him say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." What Jesus meant was, "You see before you the Messiah. I am the individual to whom the prophet referred, and in me this prophecy is fulfilled." We have a very scanty report of what took place on this occasion. The probability seems to be, that, while Jesus spoke in general terms, they were greatly pleased, and said, "Whence hath this man this wisdom? Can this be Joseph's son?" But, when he claimed to be the Messiah, they demanded that he should prove it by miracle, as they had heard of his doing in other places. In reply, he said there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when there was a great famine; but he was only sent to one who was a heathen. There were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha; but he was only sent to Naaman, and he was a worshipper of false gods; intimating, that, though he had miracles for even Gentiles, he had none for them. This roused their ire: the whole congregation rose up, seized him, and attempted to throw him down a precipice; but he slipped out of their hands, and escaped.

Jesus could no longer remain at Nazareth. He had already said, "No prophet is accepted in his own country." Matthew's Gospel very honestly tells us that "he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." The deeds of cure performed by Jesus required faith in the subjects of them; and in a place like Nazareth, where all people were acquainted with the operator, his family and his history, the faith was not. In Mark we read that Jesus "marvelled at their unbelief." To us it seems the most natural thing in the world; and his inability to do many mighty works on account of it is equally natural. But, had this young man been indeed the Messiah, the greater the unbelief, the mightier would have been the deeds performed in order to overcome it. Could he have satisfied his neighbors that he was what he professed to be, we should have had more faith in him: failing to satisfy them, how can he satisfy unbelievers now?

Along the shores of the Lake of Gennesaret Jesus had often wandered when a boy, and doubtless many times bathed and fished in its waters. Almost desolate now, they then swarmed with an industrious, if not intelligent, population. Jesus had been among them; and the poorer people had received him gladly, assented to his doctrine, and he had cured by his remarkable healing power many diseases among them. When the door at Nazareth was closed, to this simple-minded, open-hearted people he turned; "and he came," says the narrative, "and dwelt at Capernaum," a small place on the

western shore of the lake, between twenty and thirty miles from Nazareth.

Walking by the shore of the lake after his arrival, Jesus sees two brothers — Simon and Andrew, the sons of Jonas, who had been disciples of John, and with whom he was therefore acquainted — in a boat fishing. He promised, if they would go with him, to make them fishers of men. Going a little farther, he saw two brothers fishing, — James and John, the sons of Zebedee, — and induced them also to leave their fishing and follow him. Much was said on both sides, doubtless, before they left their homes, their families, and their living.

On the sabbath following, he went, accompanied by his followers, into the synagogue at Capernaum, "and taught." His hearers "were astonished at his doctrine." We are told that "his word was with power," and that he taught them as one that had authority. He who is most strongly impressed with the truth of his doctrine — all other things being equal — can most strongly impress others; and one secret of the power of Jesus lay in his earnestness, — the earnestness of enthusiasm, that collects into a focus the powers of the soul, and melts down all opposition.

In the synagogue there was a man so affected by derangement of the mind, that the people supposed him to be possessed of an unclean spirit. Departed spirits can exercise an influence over sensitive persons, so as to control their actions and their words, as mesmeric operators sometimes do those of their subjects; and some of them exercise it to the detri-

ment of the individual. Any thing that can make the subject sufficiently positive, calling up the dormant will, breaks the spell, and liberates the captive. In the time of Jesus, many kinds of nervous disease were supposed to be the result of the possession of unclean spirits; and it would be very natural for sensitive persons, influenced by this belief, to suppose themselves to be in this condition, and to act accordingly. When a person like Jesus came near, who was said to be able to cure all such persons by casting out the devils with which they were infested, his very presence, coupled with the general belief, would render them fit subjects for the exercise of his powers; and when Jesus says with authority, "Come out of him!" it operates like the "All right" of the mesmeric operater, and the person is restored. Such cases are cured in a similar manner, even to-day; as also, I think, cases of real spirit possession. In this case the man cried out, "Let us alone: what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." He had doubtless heard of the estimate that Jesus placed upon himself, and talked accordingly. Jesus exclaims, — and doubtless in a commanding tone, — "Hold thy peace, and come out of him!" Then we are told that the unclean spirit tore him, cried with a loud voice, and came out of him; which means that the man was violently contorted, uttered a loud cry, and then became calm. The by-standers were amazed, and said, "What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority command-

eth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him."[1] Credulity sees miracles in the simplest, unexplained phenomena, as scientific self-conceit discovers fraud or folly in all that goes beyond the narrow limit of its province. In consequence of this, the fame of Jesus "spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee." Such an occurrence in Massachusetts, in these days, would hardly be heard of in the next village.

When they passed out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew. In the house, Simon's mother-in-law lay sick of a fever. The occurrence in the synagogue was doubtless related to her. The wonderful person who had done this was now in the house. He who could cast out powerful demons with a word could certainly cure a fever. The patient is prepared. "Anon they tell him of her." He walks up to her, and takes her by the hand, and lifts her up: she instantly feels new life and vigor, and, going about her household duties, prepares food for the company. It is quite common for persons who have a fever produced by marsh miasm to be very sick, and yet in a short time to feel almost as well as ever they did.

By this time the village is thoroughly roused. The cure in the synagogue had been spoken of everywhere by those who were present; and now this cure of Peter's mother-in-law is noised abroad among the idle population waiting for the setting of the sun, when the sabbath ended. No sooner had the sun set than they flocked into the house, and

[1] Mark i. 27.

gathered round it from every quarter. "Here is the man who can cure all diseases: come and be healed!" The cry went out; and a crowd of wretches, suffering from all the diseases that poverty, ignorance, and filth engender, gathered round Simon's door. Jesus went among them, and laid his hands on them, strong in his ability to heal, as many of them were strong in the faith that he could heal them, — essential elements of success. The natural result is told in the second Gospel: "He healed *many* that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out *many* devils." Other accounts, less likely, state that he "healed all that were sick" (Matt. viii. 16); that "he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them" (Luke iv. 40). But, if Jesus had cured them every one, why not continue till every sick person in Capernaum was healed, and then in all Judea? This would have given evidence of his miraculous ability, and satisfied nearly all of the justness of his claim.

But even Jesus must have seen that this could not last long. There were numerous cases that he could not touch, — paralytics whose limbs were still rigid, blind whose sight could not be restored, and obstinate devils who refused to move at the word of command. It was better for him to go to new places, where the number that could be cured would be proportionally larger. In the morning he rose long before day, and went to a desert place. Simon and others followed after him, and desired him to return, telling him that all men sought for him; but Jesus said, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also" (Mark i. 38).

A good man, especially after death, is always credited with greater goodness than he really possessed, as a bad man has attributed to him more evil than he was ever guilty of. It is not surprising that the actual cures performed by Jesus led men to believe in cures that he never did perform. Had he been an ordinary healer, like Greatrakes or the Zouave Jacob, this would certainly have occurred: how much more when the person concerned was believed to be no other than a specially commissioned messenger from God for the very purpose of curing the maladies of mankind, — the Messiah, and this the very work for which he was sent! We, therefore, naturally expect to find cures attributed to Jesus that he never made; though who can set bounds to what can be accomplished in this direction by the operation of natural law? Even leprosy, a term used for various forms of skin disease, that is said to have been instantly cured by Jesus, may have yielded to the healing influence that he was able to communicate, though it may have taken a longer time than the record indicates.

Jesus was now fairly at work, preaching and healing in the various towns and villages of Galilee, followed by crowds, and obtaining shelter in the huts of the poor, or sleeping in the open air when no hospitable door was open. In his discourses he blesses the poor, and denounces the rich, the lawyers, the pompous scribes and Pharisees: he exposes their hypocrisy, and shows the absurdity of many of their deeds and doctrines, for which they hate him; but the common people hear him gladly. He returns

after some time to Capernaum, the home of the four whom he had induced to follow him; and at the house of Peter he was doubtless welcome. The mother of Jesus had also left Nazareth, and come to Capernaum; and hence Capernaum is, after this, called his home. No sooner was it known that he had returned than excitement arose, and the people thronged to hear his doctrine, and see the cures that he performed: they crowded the house where he was, and a multitude stood round the door as he addressed them. While he was speaking, four men came bearing a paralytic man on a bed; but they could not come even near the door. They therefore went on to the flat roof of the house, uncovered it sufficiently, and lowered the man down to where Jesus was. Their faith was evinced by their act, and so was the faith of the sick man: they never would have done this had he not been desirous that it should be done. The man turned his wistful eyes on the master of health, the miraculous physician, humbly begging for the word that should send the strength-giving current through his nerves, and in full faith that the word, when spoken, would accomplish it. Jesus looks at him, the crowd still as death; those near the door tip-toeing to see what is taking place, those on the roof looking down. Jesus says to the sick man, first, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." The Jews held that men's diseases were in consequence of either their own sins, or those of their parents; and Jesus speaks in accordance with this notion. The sins that caused this disease are forgiven thee. But some scribes who were present were shocked to hear Jesus

arrogate to himself a power that they supposed to belong only to God, and in their hearts they accused him of blasphemy; but Jesus, intuitively perceiving their thoughts, asks them whether it is easier to say "Thy sins be forgiven thee," or "Arise, and take up thy bed and walk." That they may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins, he turns to the sick man, and says in his commanding voice, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." With that voice, and its accompanying look, perhaps also accompanying touch, passes an electric thrill through the sick man's frame; the dormant will is aroused; a current from the brain rushes through the long-unused nerves; the man arises, takes up his bed, and walks out before them all, to the great astonishment of the spectators, who declare they never saw any thing so strange.

The title, "Son of man," which Jesus uses on this occasion, shows the thought that is forever present to his mind. Unbounded self-confidence is necessary to the successful healer. Jesus possessed it.

He had already chosen some disciples, in accordance with the practice of the religious teachers of his time; but he had not yet obtained a sufficient number. The tribes of Israel were twelve; Moses appointed twelve men to search out the promised land; and Jesus must have twelve disciples, who shall learn to cast out devils and heal diseases in their master's name, and preach his doctrine through the land. The men who were chosen do not appear to have been of the poorest or most ignorant class.

Fishermen who had boats, and hired servants (Mark i. 20), were far from belonging to the lowest class. The friends of Jesus to whom the Gospels refer appear generally to have belonged to that class who are not crushed to the earth by poverty, nor spoiled by the pride and folly that riches engender. When rich men, or men in power, were attracted to him, — and some appear to have been, — he demanded such terms of them that they were dissatisfied and departed.

One of his disciples was a publican, or tax-gatherer, — a class despised by the Jews, but who were attracted by the preaching of Jesus, and with whom he seems generally to have been on friendly terms.

Jesus saw one of these, named Matthew, sitting in the custom-house at Capernaum; and he said, "Follow me." He did so, having been probably prepared by what he had previously seen and heard, and became a disciple. On the occasion he made a great feast at his house, and invited his friends the publicans, or tribute-gatherers, with whom he had been associated in business, and other persons; and Jesus sat down and ate with them, to the great offence of the scribes and Pharisees who were present. Jesus was not destitute of that Jewish feeling which led its possessor to despise all other nations, the Jews being the favorites of Heaven, and all others little better than castaways; but his benevolence, enthusiasm, and self-esteem overshadow this to such an extent, that at times it scarcely appears as an element in his character. A Gentile who accepts him is altogether superior to the Jew who rejects him. If publicans and

sinners are friendly with him, he will be friendly with them; and, if they will acknowledge him and follow him, they shall be his disciples, and sit down with him in his kingdom. But the pious Pharisees look on, and see a fine chance to criticise him. They whisper to the disciples, "How is it that your master eats and drinks with publicans and sinners?" Full of their old Jewish prejudices, the simple fishermen know not what to say; but Jesus hears the remark, and has an answer and an excuse at once. The sick alone need the physician, and he is among them in that character. He tells them that he came to call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I did not come to call you, who think yourselves righteous, but such men as these, acknowledged sinners; and, to do that, I must go among them. The fact was, however, that the scribes and Pharisees, who considered themselves righteous, would not respond to the call; and sinners were the only ones that had confidence in him as a physician.

Seven more were added to the number of his disciples; among them Judas, who subsequently betrayed him to his enemies. It is not to be supposed, however, that the whole of the twelve were with Jesus as he wandered over Galilee, still less when he was in Judæa. Matthew probably returned to his lucrative post soon after his call. Peter, James, and John were his favorites, who generally accompanied him; but even they must have been compelled at times to attend to business at Capernaum, and Jesus seems to have travelled over Galilee occasionally alone.

It was but natural that women should be attracted to the young preacher and healer. Being more impressible than men, as well as more affectionate, he must have influenced many whose names are all unknown. Among those known to us are Mary of Magdala, out of whom he is said to have cast seven devils. Her disease was such, that it required seven trials on the part of Jesus to heal her, each apparently successful; but a return of the disorder demanded a new effort of the physician. Another of the women was Joanna, the wife of Chuza, steward of Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, Susanna, and others who were so interested in Jesus, that they occasionally accompanied him, and contributed to his support.

On one occasion he collected his disciples and friends, and went with them on to a mountain, where he made a public address. We have two reports of this address, given in Matthew and Luke; and, by comparing both, we may form some idea of the style and matter of his discourse; though it is evident that what was said on different occasions has been here collected together. Those who gathered round him were the poor, the despised, and many of his adherents who had been belied and persecuted on his account; and his address abounds with consolation for them. He is thinking of the time when he will be universal King, and of what he will do for his followers. The tables are to be turned; and those who had so long suffered are to be consoled, the apparent injustice that they had received is to cease, and they are to be rewarded for all that they have endured.

"Blessed are ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, persecute you and revile you, and cast out your names as evil, for the sake of the Son of man. Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward will be great in heaven; for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

"But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets. Happy are ye when people revile you and persecute you, and say falsely every evil thing about you, for my sake. Rejoice and exult, because your reward will be great in heaven; for thus the prophets who preceded you were persecuted. Ye are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. A lamp is not lighted to be placed under a corn measure, but on a lamp-stand; and it gives light to all the family. Thus let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven."

Some probably thought that Jesus intended to subvert the Mosaic law, and destroy all the old religious authority; and, indeed, much of his preaching was quite revolutionary. But he had no intention to break with Judaism. Jesus was a Jew to the day of his death: had he lived longer, he would probably have outgrown his birth-religion. Luther never thought

of leaving the Roman-Catholic Church when he commenced reforming its abuses. John Wesley was an Episcopalian at heart during his whole life; nor had he any thought of forming a new sect when his zeal led him to preach out of doors to the poor and ignorant. Swedenborg took the sacrament from the hands of a minister of the Swedish Church just before his death. Jesus is reported as saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all, therefore, that they bid you observe, that observe and do." His denunciation of the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers, is terrible, and was probably generally deserved; but Judaism was to Jesus divine, and he felt bound to obey its laws, as did the early Christians. His last supper was the Jewish passover.

It was long before even Peter thought of preaching to the Gentiles; and it required a vision to induce him to visit Cæsarea, and preach the gospel there. When he returned to Jerusalem, his brethren contended with him; and it required a long explanation from him before they could be satisfied. Peter never refers in his explanation to either the precept or the example of Jesus, who evidently never thought of establishing a universal religion; for he expected the destruction of the world long before it was possible for that to take place.

In his mountain sermon, Jesus is careful to let his hearers know that he has no desire to destroy their faith. "Think not," he says, "that I have come to overthrow the law or the prophets: I have come, not to overthrow, but to establish: for, till heaven and earth pass away, one iota shall by no means pass

from the law till all be accomplished." He does, however, in this very sermon, amend the old law, and practically overthrow it, by giving a superior law. "Whatsoever ye wish that men should do to you, do ye even the same to them; for this is the law and the prophets." When that is fully understood, men soon cease to burn oxen, sheep, and doves; a priest professing to come between God and the worshipper becomes an impertinence; and the holiest temple is where the greatest number of right-doing men and women are congregated.

After Jesus had been preaching and healing for some time, John, lingering in the prison of the Castle of Machærus, sends two of his disciples to him with this message: "Art thou he that should come? or do we look for another?" Believing Jesus to be the Messiah, a part of whose work was to be "the opening of the prison to the bound" (Isa. lxi. 1), he must have been expecting for some time that Jesus would deliver him. Finding no prospect of this, as the weary months passed away, his faith began very reasonably to fail; and he sends his disciples, probably to stimulate Jesus to operate in his behalf if he was indeed the Messiah, rather than to obtain his opinion of himself. It is probable, from the context, that the disciples of John said much more than we are told, and some things that must have been offensive to Jesus; for, after telling them to tell John of the wonderful cures that they saw him perform, he adds, "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." He also declares, that, among those born of women, a greater than John the Baptist had not

arisen; but "the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." No better evidence is needed of the utter inability of Jesus to transcend law than the fact that he allowed his noble friend to languish in prison, and die. Had he possessed the power, the barriers would have been instantly burst; consternation would have seized John's persecutors; and he and Jesus united could have gathered the Jews into the fold as a shepherd gathers his flock. Jesus could cast out devils, heal the sick, make the bedridden walk, and restore the paralytic; for other men can do such things by the exercise of natural power: but, when a real miracle was demanded, it was never forthcoming.

It is not my purpose to follow Jesus in his journeyings through Galilee and Judæa: it is impossible, from the Gospel record, to tell the order of his journeys, or the occurrence of his supposed miracles. Events are probably related as belonging to the latter part of his life that occurred even before his baptism. The compilers of the Gospels did not know the facts; the original writers were dead; and their only concern had been to obtain facts of a certain class in the life of Jesus, with but little regard to the time when, or even the place where, they occurred. I do not suppose any of the compilers could have told whether the public ministry of Jesus lasted for three years, or terminated in one, or knew any thing about his life between twelve and thirty. A hundred years after Shakspeare's death, and how little that is reliable could be obtained regarding him! How can we expect certain information with regard to Jesus

from men who lived so long after him, and who had to depend for their information upon documents that had been copied, translated, and recopied, and probably altered by the parties who had done this at every remove? It would be easy to make an imaginary order of the events recorded in the life of Jesus, weave poetry into them and their connection, and thus make a beautiful life of a very beautiful and wonderful man; but such a life of Jesus would shed more light upon the mentality of the writer than upon the personality of Jesus, and would give very little satisfaction to the thinker.

Making headquarters at Capernaum, and his few wants being supplied while there by his friends and disciples in that place, Jesus wandered from one Galilean village to another, healing the sick, talking in the houses, reading and commenting in the synagogues; at times accompanied by friendly men and women, who listened to his words as if they were those of an angel. Sometimes he sails across the lake in the fishermen's boats, and sits by the shore and talks to them of the oncoming kingdom of God. In some places the people crowd around him to see his wonders of healing, and hear the gospel which he preaches with a fervor, and elevation of language, that astonish them; and they ask, "Whence hath this man this doctrine?"

After travelling, preaching, and healing for some years in Galilee and Judæa, becoming daily more and more positive and demonstrative, he increases the number of his friends and multiplies his enemies — the priests, the scribes, and Pharisees, the rich and

powerful — at every step. He has no fear: he denounces his enemies with the most terrible vehemence and the most bitter invective; and, in turn, they say he has a devil and is mad, and plot against his life.

A passage in Zech. ix. 9, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass," seems to have been regarded by Jesus as a prophecy of the Messiah, as it was probably by the Jews of his time generally. To fulfil this prophecy, Jesus, a little before the time of the passover, rode into Jerusalem upon an ass, attended by his disciples, and probably by many of his Galilean friends, on their way to celebrate the feast. His friends appear to have been determined to make a triumphant entry for him into the city, as of a conquering hero. They spread their clothes in the way, and cut down branches of trees, and laid them on the road over which he was to pass. Some of his friends in the city, who had heard of his approach, came out to meet him, carrying palm-branches; and with songs and shoutings of "Hosanna! Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of Jehovah! Hosanna in the highest!" they welcomed him into the city. This was evidently gratifying to him; and, when the Pharisees wished him to stop the cries, he rebuked them. He must have known, however, that this could not last, and that the number who felt like this were but as a handful to the Judean multitude,

who were as ready to deride him when opportunity offered. The cleansing of the temple, represented by the synoptists as having taken place immediately after this, was probably done long before.

This triumphant entry must have greatly annoyed the priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees. Nothing troubles such men more than for a man to have a mind, a will, a doctrine, of his own, and especially if he can influence others to his own way of thinking. Jesus visited the temple, disputed with the members of the various religious sects and political parties, and was able, sometimes by his plain good sense and sometimes by his ingenuity, to answer the questions of those who would have entrapped him, and to reply to their arguments. He must have seen what they would do; but he seems to have courted his fate. Unable to reply to his arguments, they overcome him by craft and by force. Although he professed to believe in the law, and to uphold it, Jesus was in reality destroying it; and this the defenders of the old religion could see. In the old religion, Moses was the central figure. Jesus had pulled down Moses, and set up himself. The most strenuous upholder of Judaism was to be cast into outer darkness, if he rejected this Galilean enthusiast; and the publicans, the Romans, the harlots, were to have seats in the heavenly kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, if they did but accept of him as the Messiah.

The result was certain: the enemies of Jesus had the money, the influence, the law, on their side. They accused him; and by the aid of a traitorous disciple, and the assistance of the Romans, they cru-

cified him, and doubtless thought that his doctrine was crucified with the man: but the death of Jesus was the life of his cause.

His resurrection put soul into what was before a mere body, and sent it on its magnificent mission. With all the advantages that Jesus possessed, and all the elements of success that conspired to make him appear as the looked-for Messiah, he never would have been known to us as such, had it not been for his supposed resurrection from the dead. It was this that aroused the mourning women and half-dead disciples: it blew what before had been a mere spark into a rushing, mounting flame. It was this that sent the disciples through the world like fire-brands, burning up the old gods and the old creeds as stubble. The ground was prepared for the seed of the Christian gospel, which was sown in millions of hearts, honest and otherwise, and bore fruit that was resown till the harvest became wide as the world.

Jesus was crucified on Friday; and after hanging upon the cross from three to six hours, appearing to be dead, his legs were not broken, as was the custom, but his body was taken down by Joseph, — a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim who was friendly to Jesus, — after he had received permission from the Roman authorities. Joseph had the body conveyed to a new sepulchre in his garden, which was quite near the place of crucifixion, and probably in the immediate vicinity of his private residence. Here, by the light of torches, — several women who had followed Jesus from Galilee sitting opposite the sepulchre, and watching the proceeding with great interest, — Joseph

wraps the body in linen, and winds a napkin around the head, according to the Jewish burial custom. While wrapping the body, he discovers some evidences that life is not extinct, but carefully conceals this from the by-standers; and after the body is prepared, and properly laid, a huge stone is rolled against the door, and all depart to rest over the sabbath according to the commandment.

Joseph's mind is considerably agitated as he walks in the garden late that Friday evening, and thinks over the events of the day. "I must rescue this man from his enemies" is his first thought; and, as soon as all is still, with the assistance of a young man — his gardener, to whom he has intrusted the secret — he rolls away the stone, and they enter the sepulchre. Quickly removing the clothes from the body and head, they convey him into the house of Joseph, where by careful attention they are at length rejoiced to see the flush of life return to the cheeks: the eyes open, and Jesus the crucified is alive! The questions then come to Joseph, "What can I do with him? where can he go? Should his friends convey him into the city, he may be seen by his enemies, and they would certainly put him to death, and I should suffer for assisting him. The disciples are living in a rented apartment, and it would be madness for him to go there. We must get him well as soon as possible, and send him to Galilee, where it will be much safer for him among his friends and acquaintances than it can possibly be here." He converses with Jesus upon the subject, who consents to Joseph's arrangement.

By Sunday morning, Jesus has so far recovered as to be able to move about. As before his crucifixion he believed himself to be the Messiah, — a faith only shaken by the pain on the cross, when he exclaimed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" — so now he is, if possible, more firmly satisfied than before; for has not God his Father raised him from the dead? For Jesus to think otherwise than this was impossible.

Several women from Galilee, who had been attached to Jesus, among whom was Mary Magdalene, — after resting upon the sabbath day, — came to the sepulchre very early on Sunday morning, before it was light, to behold the body of him whom they had loved and revered, and perform the last sad rites. They find, to their astonishment, the stone rolled away, the body gone; and some of them look in, and see the linen in which it had been wrapped, and the napkin for the head, lying just where they had been dropped by Joseph. They very naturally conclude that some one has removed the body, and stand looking into the sepulchre and around the spot, much troubled and perplexed. The young man who assisted Joseph to remove Jesus, as instructed by Joseph, approaches the women, tells them that Jesus is risen, and requests them to inform the disciples that he is going to Galilee, and will see them there; the intention of Joseph being to send Jesus as soon as possible to Galilee, before his resurrection becomes known and his life endangered. The women run, as was natural under the extraordinary circumstances, to carry the disciples word. We can see them

burst into that upper room, breathless with the run and excitement. "Jesus is gone! the stone was rolled away, and the door open! We saw a young man or an angel, who told us that he was risen, and was going to Galilee; and he wishes you to go there, and you will see him." The disciples stare incredulously: it is too good news to be true. Hope, dying in their hearts for days, had gone completely out; and now they do not wish to hope, and be cruelly disappointed again. The words of the women seemed to them "as idle tales." They argue with them, present the impossibility of the occurrence having taken place, and suggest the probability of some deception having been practised. All the women except Mary Magdalene return to their homes: but Peter and John resolve to see for themselves whether there is any truth in the statements of the women; and they accordingly run at great speed to the sepulchre, John outrunning Peter. They find the stone rolled away, the sepulchre open, the body gone, the linen cloth lying in one place, and the napkin in another; and then they know that the women were so far right. The body is gone; but where? Able to form no conception, they return.

Mary Magdalene's great love for the earnest, loving young Nazarene leads her to make a further effort to discover where Jesus is. She is dissatisfied with the meagre statements of the young man. She naturally asks, "How is he going to Galilee? Cannot we go with him? Will he not see us as well as the disciples? Perhaps, if I return to the sepulchre, I may see that young man or angel, I hardly know

which, and learn where Jesus really is." As she returns alone, she meets Peter and John on their way to the city. They acknowledge that the body is gone; but they are still faithless with regard to the statement of the young man, and do not yet dare to hope that Jesus, whom they saw dead on Friday, is on this Sunday morning alive, and on his way to Galilee.

They suggest that some one may have removed the body, and then deceived the women with the statement of the resurrection. They infect her with their doubts; and she sadly returns to the sepulchre, looks in, and sees through her blinding tears the two heaps of white clothing at the head and foot of where Jesus had lain, which appear to her, in the dim light and in her excited condition, as two angels.

Jesus, from his place of concealment in Joseph's house, sees Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre: he perceives that she is weeping, and resolves to comfort her. The young man provides him with some of his clothes, and he approaches the sepulchre where Mary still stands. Jesus says, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She turns her head, sees Jesus standing, but, owing to the change in his clothing, does not recognize him; but, supposing him to be the gardener, says, "Sir, if thou hast carried him off, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus says to her, "Mary!" in the old familiar tone to which she had been accustomed; and she instantly recognizes him, cries "Master!" and offers to embrace him. But he says, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father," as he is still weak

from the effect of the crucifixion. But he regards it as the result of his existence in the body: all his weakness will be gone when he has ascended to his Father. He tells her to tell the disciples to go into Galilee; his intention being, not to see the disciples in Jerusalem, but in Galilee, as Joseph had suggested. Mary Magdalene, overjoyed at the appearance of Jesus, runs to obey his command, and Jesus returns to the house. She rushes among the disciples, her face radiant with joy. "Our Master is alive! I have seen him! I have talked with him, and he wishes you to go to Galilee." The disciples do not, however, believe this. Why should their Master, if he has indeed arisen, appear to this woman only? Why should they go to Galilee? Why did not the angel, or Jesus, or some one, appear to Peter and John when they were at the sepulchre?

During the day, all the disciples, and multitudes of the friends of Jesus, visit the sepulchre, but discover nothing but the linen cloth, the napkin, the solid rock walls. Silence is everywhere, and no clew can be obtained to the mysterious disappearance of the body. Joseph feels that every thing depends upon the most perfect secrecy, and has allowed nothing to be told but what appeared absolutely necessary. Jesus sees less necessity for this.

The wildest rumors are circulating through Jerusalem: the five women are walking from house to house where their friends are lodged, telling the strange news, "The tomb was empty! Jesus is risen! we saw an angel!" Some are sure they saw two, dressed in white, one at the head, and the other at the

foot, where Jesus had laid. "Mary Magdalene has seen Jesus himself." Yesterday she was broken-hearted with grief: to-day she is wild with joy. The friends of Jesus are looking up: something wonderful has happened. "He was the Messiah, after all. We were not mistaken: Israel shall be redeemed."

The statement of Mary Magdalene on her return the second time, that she had actually seen and conversed with Jesus, so impresses Peter, that he returns to the garden and the sepulchre, is seen by Joseph, and, being known as the boldest, most energetic and zealous, of the disciples, is invited into the house, introduced to Jesus, and Joseph and they consult as to the best course to be pursued with regard to the future. Absolute secrecy is enjoined upon him, without which ruin may come to all.

Jesus, learning from Peter that the disciples do not believe the women, and refuse to leave Jerusalem, is determined to see his beloved followers in that upper room as soon as it is dark enough for him to leave Joseph's house with safety to himself and his benefactor. That evening the disciples are assembled in their room, the door closed for fear of the Jews. They are eating supper, and all talking over the astounding events of the day. It is whispered that Simon, who is now absent, has seen Jesus, and talked with him. Two come in from Emmaus, and are told the wonderful news; and in turn they tell of a person that they had met and conversed with, who had mysteriously disappeared; and now they are sure it was Jesus. Some are ready to believe any thing; others are doubtful: but, whilst they are all talking

in the most excited manner, Jesus himself, by Peter's assistance, appears in the midst of them, and says, "Peace be unto you." The suddenness of his appearance terrifies some of them, and they suppose it to be his spirit; but he assures them by saying, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Having had no good opportunity to eat while concealed in Joseph's house, or the food being such as he was unaccustomed to, he is hungry, and asks them if they have any meat. They provide him with fish and honey, which he eats before them. After supper he converses with them, blames them for being so slow to believe in his resurrection, and commands them to preach his Messiahship to all people in words and tones corresponding with his own overmastering assurance. Late at night he walks out with them towards the Mount of Olives, that being probably the direction in which Joseph's residence was situated: perhaps again with the assistance of Peter, he secretly leaves them, so that he may not compromise Joseph, to whose house he returns.

As the result of the crucifixion, exposure, and excitement to which he has been subjected, added to the meal of fish and honey, — very improper diet for a person in his condition, — he is taken sick, and, after lingering for some time, dies, and is secretly buried by Joseph. The disciples, finding that Jesus does not re-appear, or, among those who are present at his death, some having clairvoyantly seen his ascending spirit, console themselves with the belief that he will speedily return, as he had promised, "in the

clouds of heaven," with all his holy angels, and fulfil the glorious promise that he had made them.

While Jesus was alive, for Joseph to have made public his resuscitation would not only have endangered the life of Jesus, but his own for harboring a condemned criminal: hence he keeps the matter as far as possible a secret, only allowing such persons to know as are necessary for the comfort of Jesus; and they, of course, acquiesce in the necessity of intrusting the facts of the case to as few persons as possible. Now that Jesus is dead, Joseph is equally secretive, as it would still be dangerous to have his conduct known; and it must have seemed to him the easiest way to let the whole matter blow over, as he probably supposed it would do in a few days, when the Galileans had returned to their homes by the Lake of Gennesaret.

Had Jesus actually risen from the dead, as Christians suppose, Joseph of Arimathæa, who was friendly to him before his crucifixion, who boldly asked Pilate for his body, and who apparently considered himself honored by having it buried in his sepulchre, would have been the very man to preach that resurrection with all the power of his soul, backed by his property and extensive influence. He would have been a Paul in the infant church, whose members would have welcomed him as a leader. Why is it that we hear nothing of Joseph after the supposed resurrection? His silence is suggestive. He evidently knew too much.

The Jews, hearing the story of the resurrection, and learning that the body of Jesus was absent from

the tomb on Sunday morning, very naturally supposed that the disciples stole it, in order to get up the story of the resurrection; and, to show the falsity of this, some one invents the account of the Roman guard who watched the sepulchre, which we only find in the Gospel attributed to Matthew, and where alone we read of the bright shining angel of the Lord, who drove away the guard so that the women could approach.

The account of the appearance of Jesus to his disciples in Galilee, as related in Matthew, arose from the fact of the young man and Jesus having sent word to the disciples that they were to go to Galilee. It may be objected that Matthew must have known that Jesus did not go to Galilee. But we have seen that it is impossible that Matthew's Gospel, as we possess it, could have been written by any disciple of Jesus, or till many years after his death, when it was reasonable for a Christian believer to think, that since an angel and Jesus requested the disciples to go to Galilee, and stated that Jesus would see them there, he must have gone, and they must have seen him. The statement that "some doubted" probably arose from the openly expressed doubts of Thomas, referred to in the fourth Gospel.

The account in Mark of the young man in a long white garment, in Luke of the two men in shining garments, and in John of the two angels in white, sitting, came from the confusion that was sure to arise in such a time of excitement from the accounts of the women and Mary Magdalene, who saw in the dim light the linen cloth and napkin left by Joseph

when he accompanied Jesus to the house. One of them tells the story of the young man seen in the twilight, and of what he said: another is sure he was an angel. They speak of looking into the sepulchre, and seeing something white: yes, another saw two white objects, that looked like men clothed in long white garments, suggested by the long linen clothes. These become eventually angels: for, after the resurrection of Jesus was established, there could be nothing too wonderful for belief; and the message given by the young man, altered to agree with the third Gospel's account of the resurrection, is transferred to the "two men in shining garments," who in Luke xxiv. 23 are represented as angels.

The appearance of Jesus to the other Mary, related by Matthew (Matt. xxviii. 9), may have arisen from his actual appearance to Mary Magdalene. Both being Marys, it would be very easy for the statement of one to be applied to the other. The story of the appearance to two of the disciples on the road to Emmaus may have grown out of a conversation with some stranger familiar with their doctrine and with Jesus, possibly an Essene. Having lived in Galilee all their lives, and heard the new doctrines only from Jesus, they would be much startled by hearing them from the lips of a stranger; and, after hearing of the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene and Peter, they conclude that this stranger must have been Jesus. The statement in Mark that he appeared to them "in another form," and in Luke "that their eyes were holden that they should not know him," are evidences that it was some other

than Jesus with whom they conversed. How could they walk and talk for hours with one with whom they were so well acquainted, and not know him?

The account in John of the second appearance of Jesus to his disciples eight days after the first, during which he told the doubting Thomas to behold his hands, and thrust his hand into his side, is so decidedly romantic, that, if it had occurred, we might reasonably expect that it would have been noticed by the other evangelists, as it does not seem possible that they could have failed to hear of it. The extravagance of telling Thomas to put his hand into the hole in his side, into which, if it had existed, it is not probable that his little finger could have been inserted, belongs to the domain of romance rather than that of history. Thomas may have been absent at the time of the appearance of Jesus, and afterward have made the sceptical remark attributed to him; and out of this may have grown the belief that Jesus did subsequently give him the opportunity that he desired, or he may afterward have seen Jesus at Joseph's house.

Of the appearances related in the twenty-first chapter of John, it is evident that they were written by some other hand than that which wrote the body of the Gospel. The genuineness of this part of the Gospel has been doubted by many of the best critics; among them Grotius, Le Clerc, Semler, Paulus, Bertholdt, Lücke, De Wette, and Schott. The words that precede this chapter were evidently intended to conclude the Gospel: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are

not written in this book: but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life in his name." What man would think of writing this, and then writing a number of other things that Jesus did and said? If he had concluded to write more, he would have placed them at the close of his book, where they evidently belong. This addition to the Gospel was probably written by some one who held the not unreasonable opinion, that, if Jesus was on the earth for forty days previous to his ascension, he must have been employed; and he welcomes this tradition to fill up the immense gap that previously existed.

Paul's vision of Jesus needs no other explanation than visions of Jesus which have been repeatedly seen by both Catholics and Protestants, and many of them by persons now living. A well-known lawyer in Boston informs me that he has had many visions of Jesus as he is generally represented by artists, but can form no idea of the cause. Were he as fanatical as he is calm and sensible, these visions might lead him to suppose himself Heaven's favorite, for whose glorification they were vouchsafed.

The statement made by Paul alone, that above five hundred brethren saw Jesus at once, is a good illustration of the development of stories of that kind from a little seed of truth; since there were only one hundred and twenty believers after the ascension (Acts i. 15). Paul had evidently been imposed upon.

Accepting this theory, we can see the necessity for

secrecy that must have been imposed upon Joseph and all who were familiar with the facts; and this necessity would inevitably be the cause of misleading statements by the parties concerned, so as to baffle their enemies, and insure the safety of Jesus and themselves. This would account to some extent for the confused statements which we find in the Gospels, where we have apparently but a little told of what was really known. This accounts for the sudden appearance and disappearance of Jesus: it explains why he only appeared to the believers, and even to them but seldom and for a short time. The mother of Jesus may have been sick in consequence of the agony that she must have endured at the death of her son and her hopes; and Jesus could not visit her. It accounts, in short, in a rational and simple manner, for most of the statements found in the Gospels, acknowledging the general truthfulness of the parties concerned; while the commonly-received opinion of a resurrected flesh-and-blood man, and his ascension to heaven, is so unreasonable and unnatural, that it may be safely said the increasing intelligence of mankind must eventually destroy all confidence in its truth.

Those who did see Jesus, with but few exceptions, honestly thought that God had raised him from the dead; Joseph not caring to reveal his share in the transaction. They went forth preaching Jesus the Messiah, known "by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did by him," who was "numbered with the transgressors," by wicked hands crucified and slain, but raised up by God, "who would not suffer his

Holy One to see corruption;" and of this they were witnesses, and were willing to die in attestation of the truth of their statements. They preached with power; for they were honest and earnest as men struggling for life. They preached the almost immediate destruction of the world; and the converts gave their property to help the needy, which could not but cause the Christian society to grow with great rapidity. Effete Judaism and corrupt Paganism, as they died, fed the sapling that sprang from their decaying trunks: it spread over the civilized world, and thousands of millions dwelt under its branches, and ate of its fruit.

Christianity, with all its defects, is, in many respects, the noblest religious tree that our planet has ever produced; and though humanity will live to see the last twig die that shall spring from its decaying roots, — the religious sentiment in man, the soil from which all religions spring, giving birth to higher forms better adapted to man's more developed nature, — yet its history will be an object of interest to thinkers who shall live here millions of years after we have departed.

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